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**A Partnership of Education and Entertainment:
A Case Study of the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment
Technology at Guilford Technical Community College**

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**A Partnership of Education and Entertainment:
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Technology at Guilford Technical Community College**

by

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Treatise

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Dedication

To my loving, supportive, and understanding husband, Patrick,
without whose encouragement, enthusiasm, and devotion to me and the
fulfillment of our dreams, this journey would not have been possible. You have
made numerous sacrifices over the past two years, and I thank you for that. You
have been my editor, my source of inspiration, and my biggest supporter
throughout this process. I love you.

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who always told me I could do anything that I put my mind to
and taught me how to dream. You are the smartest people on earth.
You know how to live life to its fullest and have taught me how to
find joy in the smallest things.

To my brother, Aaron,
for always keeping track of me and my progress. I can now tell you that my
homework is done.

To my sister, April, her children, and her grandchildren,
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education, the value of goal setting, and the importance of following your heart.

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**A Partnership of Education and Entertainment:
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at Guilford Technical Community College**

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Alison Joan Wiers, Ed.D.

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Supervisor: John E. Roueche

Local and global economies are changing rapidly, and technological advances make it difficult for employers to attract and retain qualified employees. The need for more highly educated human capital is growing; yet, many companies seem to be unaware of the training options available to them through community colleges. At the same time in which industry faces educational and training challenges, community colleges face monetary challenges. The community college mission to provide affordable education to the masses is in jeopardy, for example, colleges are finding the need to raise tuition prices. One solution to meeting community needs is found in the union between community constituents and community colleges. This union, if designed appropriately, will result in programs that meet the educational needs of the

community, resulting in higher employment rates and stronger community economic bases.

Literature indicates that the creation of partnerships among community colleges and others make on the community, the partnering entity, and the college through the establishment and delivery of innovative programs can be significant. Entrepreneurial and transformational leadership plays a pivotal role in the development of such partnerships.

A qualitative case study was conducted of the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology (LGSET) at Guilford Technical Community College (GTCC) in Jamestown, North Carolina. The LGSET is a partnership formed between Larry Gatlin and GTCC, resulting in an Entertainment Technology program that prepares students for work in the entertainment industry through studies in sound, lighting, performance, and artist management.

The research revealed that establishing effective and sustainable partnerships can benefit community colleges throughout the nation. Benefits derived from the partnerships should not be one-sided, but should be established with mutual goals and mission as the central focus to ensure that maximum benefit can be derived from the relationships.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The 1960's were an exciting time in higher education. Community colleges were being designed and built at a rapid rate, and funding was plentiful. The biggest issue facing community colleges during the early years was that of burgeoning enrollments. The community college had a stalwart primary focus and a distinct mission, open access and the promise of education to the masses.

Little has changed in the past 45-plus years with regard to community college mission and focus. The mission of the community college has been to provide comprehensive, community-based opportunities for lifelong learning to those who seek education (Vaughan, 2006). Even now community colleges are still striving to meet their mission faithfully. Between 1995 and 2005, community college enrollments increased from 5.3 million to 6.2 million. Today, college enrollments continue to escalate, and the construction of new community colleges continues, but the slowing pace of construction contrasts to the flourishing enrollments (American Association of Community Colleges, 2005b; Vaughan, 2006).

The global economy and competitive business market now require advanced skills and training in the workforce. Employees and employers alike are realizing the need for education and specialized training programs to keep pace

with changes in industry. The ideal solution for these companies is an organization that has the knowledge-base, staff, and pioneering spirit to join forces with the company to create programs that meet these definitive needs.

College administrators must always focus on their primary mission of providing programs for the ever-changing community base they serve. Changes in technology, manufacturing, service industries, and the like, all directly impact the needs of a community and its commerce, and in turn affect college program offerings. College enrollments are rising, bringing the promise of educational opportunities to the masses and fulfilling the community college mission (Vaughan, 2006); however, state and federal funding to support college efforts has not increased in commensurate fashion (American Association of Community Colleges, 2005b). In the face of the proportional shrinking government funding, however, college administrators are being forced to hold tightly to the college mission of providing open access to all.

Even with funding reductions, college administrators are obliged to continue to conceive of new programs which meet the needs of the local population and businesses. In order to continue to provide these necessary programs, college administrators are realizing now that they must become more creative in their quest for additional funding, digging deeper into their imaginations and thinking outside of the proverbial “box”.

In light of the need for colleges to provide more service with less money, college administrators have risen to the challenge with entrepreneurial strategy.

Community college administrators are discovering that the creation of partnerships allow them to design innovative programs while subsidizing funding shortfalls effectively. These partnerships allow the college to meet community needs while enhancing its reputation and the partners.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this research was to study the impact of partnerships between community colleges and other entities on the community, the partnering entity, and the college. Additionally, the research examined the establishment and delivery of innovative programs generated by the formation of partnerships.

Local and global economies are changing rapidly, making it difficult for employers to attract and retain qualified employees (Rossi, 2006). Technological advances result in the implementation of automation in the workplace, often displacing personnel. The need for more highly educated human capital is growing; yet, many companies in business and industry seem to be unaware of available training options. Additionally, recruiting skilled and knowledgeable employees is also an issue (Rossi, 2006).

At the same time in which business and industry face education and training challenges, community colleges face monetary challenges. The proportion of funding which community colleges receive from governments is decreasing, resulting in shrinking budgets and reexamined priorities. Community

college administrators lack the ability to identify potential community and workforce needs, possibly as a result of their inability to fund potential solutions or failure to recognize such needs.

The obvious answer to meeting community needs is found in the union between corporations, external constituents, and community colleges. This union, if designed appropriately, will result in the creation of programs that meet the educational needs of the community, resulting in higher employment rates and a stronger economic base for the entire community.

Specific Problem Area

Although community colleges have taken on partnership roles for decades, a formal accounting of partnerships across the nation has yet to be taken (Taber, 1995). Many programs (see Chapter 2 for examples) exist as a result of an alliance between a community college and a business or private individual; yet, further exploration into the development and maintenance of such programs is necessary. One must ascertain whether these programs are meeting the needs and desires of business and industry. Are partnerships an effective way to provide more programming options to students, while meeting the needs of business and community? One method of answering these questions is to analyze an existing partnership comprehensively. The partnership analyzed was the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology at Guilford Technical Community College.

Research Questions

The author has answered the following questions:

1. What was the historical development of the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology?
2. What is the organizational structure for the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology?
3. How was the curriculum designed to meet the needs of the industry and the community?
4. What is the appeal of this program to students?
5. How did all elements converge to create this partnership?

Definition of Terms

A variety of terms will recur frequently in this treatise. Common terms include:

Alliance, collaboration, and partnership – These terms are used interchangeably. Each represents a formal union that is a “mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to achieve common goals” (Buettner, Morrison, & Wasicek, 2002, p. 6). This joint venture is

designed to promote and enhance learning while generating an end product that benefits the local community and meets the objectives of each individual party.

Community – A community is “often called the college’s service area or service region” (Vaughan, 2006, p. 6). A community is a group of people living, working, and existing together while offering mutual assistance and support to one another. The development of this area “means to expand or realize the potentialities of the place and the people . . .” (Gleazer, 1980, p. 38).

Community college – A publicly funded and “regionally accredited institution of higher education that offers the associate degree as its highest degree; however, today, in a number of states community colleges offer the bachelor’s degree as well” (Vaughan, 2006, p. 1). A community college is an institution that provides academic, workforce development, and vocational educational opportunities, typically to members of the immediate community. At the fundamental core of this institution lies an “emphasis on civic education and responsiveness to community values . . .” (Gleazer, 1995, p. 27). Vaughan contends that “community colleges are distinguished from other institutions of higher education by their commitment to open access, comprehensiveness in course and program offerings, and community building” (Vaughan, 2006, p. 1).

Entrepreneur – An entrepreneur is one who has the ability to think outside of the standard parameters and common practices of everyday business. An entrepreneur is innovative, while open to “responsible risk taking” and “proactive responsiveness” (Flannigan, Greene, & Jones, 2005, p. 3). A person possessing such a spirit exemplifies a willingness to strike out in new directions to meet goals in new and original ways.

Full-time equivalence (FTE) – Operational funding paid to a community college by the state to the college based on a full-time average of total student enrollment numbers.

Guilford Technical Community College (GTCC) – Founded in 1958, the community college has been serving the Greensboro, North Carolina, area for almost 50 years. Guilford Technical Community College has campuses in Jamestown, High Point, and Greensboro, North Carolina. The college also has an aviation center which is located at the Piedmont Triad International Airport (Guilford Technical Community College, 2006a).

Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology (LGSET) – A school within Guilford Technical Community College, “this curriculum prepares individuals for entry-level employment in entertainment, particularly in the fields of sound and lighting. Instruction provides training not only in these technical

aspects, but also prepares students to manage careers in this contract-to-contract type of work” (Guilford Technical Community College, 2006b, p. 144).

Mission – Mission refers to the core concern of the community college. The mission represents the articulated undertaking or purpose of the college which “was established on the belief that education is necessary for the maintenance of the democracy, is essential for the improvement of society, and helps equalize opportunity for all people” (Roueche, 1968, p. 7). It is suggested that the mission of all community colleges is “to encourage and facilitate lifelong learning, with community as process and product” (Gleazer, 1980, p. 16).

The open door or open access – These terms are considered to be interchangeable. The open door is a metaphor for open access. Both terms refer to the fundamental mission of the community college which states that the college exists to serve and educate the people of the community (Roueche, Ely, & Roueche, 2001).

Resource development – “. . . directly related to an institution’s mission and consists of the entire process of securing external funds” (Glass & Jackson, 1998a, para 7).

Need for the Study

The primary mission of the community college is to provide educational opportunities for all, while serving the needs of the community. Since the 1980's community college leaders have been forced to compete with other governmental agencies to acquire funding to continue serving students adequately. Faced with burgeoning enrollments and declining financial support from federal, state, and local entities, community college leaders have been forced to adopt an entrepreneurial spirit. This entrepreneurial perspective requires leaders to think outside of the traditional parameters of cutting programs or passing increases along to students in the form of raised tuition and fees. Further, concerns have emerged as ramifications of past tuition pricing increases, causing college administrators to deal with deferred enrollment for those with limited financial means necessary for entering college. This enrollment hindrance is incongruent with the community college mission of providing affordable access.

The obstacles and trends that community colleges face in the year 2006, and beyond, are varied; yet, all are a part of one overarching theme of maintaining the promise of open access. Colleges are being asked to provide more for students with fewer financial resources, requiring educational institutions to make a choice between slowly increasing tuition prices or seeking alternative funding (Cejda & Leist, 2006; Glass & Jackson, 1998a; Keener, Carrier, & Meaders, 2002; K. McClenney & Mingle, 1992; Merisotis & Wolanin, 2000; Ryan & Palmer, 2005).

Over 11.6 million students are attending community colleges which translates to approximately 46% of all enrolled undergraduates in the United States (American Association of Community Colleges, 2005b). Enrollments are continuing to increase; yet, funding has not increased commensurate with enrollments. These financial disparities and continual tuition rate rises are sometimes “significant enough to question our commitment to open access in some cases” (Milliron & De Los Santos, 2004, p. 112).

Although there are other adopted and accepted methods of supplementing college coffers, partnerships have proven to be very long-lasting answers to these issues. Partnerships are fraught with problems, so understanding the fundamental relationship and practices is critical. Many college administrators have pursued partnerships without understanding basic collaborative models and have found mixed success in their endeavors.

This case study examined the collaborative nature of the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology partnership at Guilford Technical Community College, focusing on the challenges and ultimate success of the program. The Larry Gatlin is a program which is designed to meet a niche market within the entertainment industry uniquely. The definitive goal of this study was to provide a detailed framework for the execution of successful partnerships, resulting in distinctive quality curriculum programs.

Significance of the Problem

During the community college boom in the 1960's, community colleges began to discover their purpose and place in society. Community colleges "found that it was necessary to design a curriculum to fit the level of educational development attained by the people and to adapt educational programs to meet their needs" (Gleazer, 1995, p. 6). Since that time, community colleges have been striving to meet the educational needs of the current business climates in their service areas.

For several decades community colleges have embraced the idea of partnerships as a way to meet the needs of their communities. In 1980, after reviewing the results of a nationwide survey on partnerships, Gilder and Rocha (1980) proclaimed that "cooperative arrangements, it is clear, have enabled local community colleges to dramatically extend and broaden learning opportunities and services by sharing resources" (p. 11).

Twenty-five years later the argument that community colleges can and should engage in cooperative arrangements is still ongoing. Former Community College of Denver president, Byron McClenney (1995), identified a primary reason why community colleges should join forces with community entities and engage in partnerships. He writes:

There is little recognition of the interdependence required to make fundamental changes. However, because communities are facing

declining resources, and because the problems are far too complex for any one entity to solve, collaboration is now emerging as a vehicle to frame solutions to complex community problems and to prevent further erosion of the quality of life. But what entity or organization possesses a broad enough or varied enough bundle of perspectives, skills, and resources to step forward as a convener or facilitator of collaborative efforts? Now more than ever before, community colleges have begun to ask whether they could and perhaps should be that entity (p. 84).

Few would argue that community colleges are not well positioned to respond to community needs. Gilliland (1995) states that “most community college leaders believe that no other organization in society is as well-positioned to deal with economic, social, cultural, and political issues as the community-based and locally focused community college” (p. 45). These societal requirements mean more than working with social agencies. Colleges are obligated to deliver educational opportunities that also meet the needs of business and industry.

Partnerships reap benefits. The level to which these benefits is realized depends on the details of the relationship that has been built. Colleges that fail to maximize the full potential of a partnership are foregoing significant benefits. Those colleges not connecting with outside constituencies are losing out on the

prospect of furthering the economic growth and personal development of the community and its citizens.

The significance of this study is based on the premise that community colleges must learn create sustainable partnerships. Many opportunities for partnerships exist; yet, concerns remain over the relative viability, sustainability, and educational purpose of these unions. Benefits for all parties exist; however, the primary concern should be that of delivering programs that meet the direct needs of the citizens of the community.

Conclusion

There is widespread agreement that community colleges are currently meeting their mission of serving the community. Community needs are not stagnate, however, and solutions that worked in the past may not work today or tomorrow. College leaders are recognizing the need for an entrepreneurial spirit to offset fiscal pressures and encourage stronger relationships with external constituencies.

American Association of Community Colleges President Emeritus Edmund Gleazer (1995) contends:

There are at least three compelling reasons for forging connections with other community-based institutions:

1. Economies [pooled resources] may be possible.

2. Learning opportunities are opened up beyond the classroom.
3. A coalition of effort in interpreting the high social value of education will be much more effective than individual, and perhaps self-serving, activities of any single kind of educational institution (pp. 17, 18).

This list represents a small portion of the range of possibilities that can be achieved through alliances.

The most encouraging thought is that “there seems to be an awakening of an understanding that everyone benefits when individuals and organizations come together in collaboration” (Gilliland, 1995, p. 43). In an effort to look forward, organizations must acknowledge and embrace the fact that there is much to be learned from examining the successes and failures of existing partnerships and putting that knowledge to practical use. Community college leaders must ask themselves if current programs are meeting the combined needs of the community and business interests through responsive and effective methods.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

There are many societal factors that influence a community college during the selection of partnerships with private individuals, corporations in business and industry, or the community-at-large. This chapter provides a literature review of issues pertinent to the establishment of partnerships. The literature reveals persistent societal issues plaguing community colleges, the community, and commerce; partnerships may well be a viable solution for some of these concerns. Additionally, the literature offers a vote of confidence for community colleges and the collaborative programs which exist currently.

The Globalized Economy

Over the past twenty-plus years, the American economy has seen a dramatic shift in many of its industries. Technological changes have resulted in a swing toward greater automation in industries such as manufacturing, placing more demand on businesses to find ways to train workers. As a result, the need for unskilled labor is decreasing as the manufacturing industry experiences a

steady decline in business, foreshadowing imminent closures. Those workers fortunate enough to remain employed by manufacturing companies now are required to have a combination of skills and technical knowledge to operate complicated and technologically advanced machinery. Many of these workers are attending community colleges to obtain the required certifications to meet minimal job requirements, while others are going to college for retraining, with hopes of entering a different job market. Furthermore, the globalization of business requires more knowledge workers to meet international business demands. As a competitive necessity, organizations involved in global business are sending employees to community colleges to receive the proper training. Perhaps the rising enrollments at community colleges can be attributed to factors facing the nation's economy in addition to the growing population.

Management and economics guru, Peter Drucker, believes that "the most valuable asset of the 21st-century institution, whether business or non-business, will be its knowledge workers and their productivity" (1999, p. 135). Drucker defines a knowledge worker as an employee who is seen as an asset to the organization, who includes innovation in his or her job, has autonomy, focuses on quality, and welcomes the opportunity to learn continually (p. 142). The knowledge worker will change the way in which businesses and employees interact. However, the primary question is: How will these industries keep up with employment trends and demands?

Concerns over the globalization of American business and the ability of Americans to continue to compete in such an aggressive economy is the subject of Thomas Friedman's book, *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century* (2006). Friedman expresses concern over the "quiet crisis" he believes America is facing. This crisis is the lack of educational preparation in the fields of science, math, and technology from our emerging generations.

In a recent interview, U.S. Secretary of Labor, Elaine Chao, expressed concern over the workforce divide that is occurring. Chao states:

Our country is facing a skills gap. About 4.5 million new jobs have been created since May 2003. The majority [of these new jobs] require higher skills and higher educational levels, and that means these are relatively well-paying jobs. Our job is to make sure that we provide training and work with the private sector to train the workforce (Roston, 2005, p. 6).

The issues expressed by Drucker, Friedman, and Chao should be seriously considered. Access to essential education that is needed by future and current employees is the responsibility of the business world and educational institutions. These groups must come together to work with one another to avert potential future economic disasters.

Recently the American Society for Training and Development reported results from a 2005 survey issued to manufacturing companies throughout the United States. Details of the survey revealed:

More than 80 percent of respondents said that they are experiencing an overall shortage of qualified workers—13 percent said their need is severe. Equally troubling, 90 percent indicated a moderate to severe shortage of skilled production employees. . . . In addition to employee shortages, manufacturers reported dissatisfaction with their workers' skill sets. Nearly half said their employees 'lack adequate basic employability skills', and a staggering 36 percent indicated insufficient reading, writing, and communication skills. Those shortages are having a widespread impact on manufacturers' abilities to achieve production levels and increase productivity. Eighty-three percent said the shortages are affecting their ability to meet customer demands. Worse, those issues are not shared by countries with strong educational heritages, such as China, India, and Russia . . . (Rossi, 2006, p. 12).

The required education employees need goes beyond that of reading, writing, and math. Employee training also must include technical training, work process skill training, safety training, sales and marketing training, and management training (Davenport, 2006). Each of these areas is critical to the success of any organization and its future.

A Vote of Confidence for Community Colleges

During a recent visit to Metropolitan Community College (Omaha, NE), President Bush publicly decreed that America can and will stay competitive in the global economy. President Bush (June 7, 2006) proclaimed, “Community colleges are a really important part of making sure America remains a competitive nation. . . . One way we can shape the future is to make sure people have the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century, and one of the best places for people to learn the skills of the 21st century is at a community college” (KETV Channel 7). Over the years community colleges’ reputations for responsiveness and delivery on promises have been recognized fully by the President of the United States and by the American public. But community colleges alone cannot prevent the United States from losing its global leadership position. They must join forces with business and industry to ensure that critical issues are being resolved.

Federal Pressures

In his 2004 State of the Union Address, President Bush reported on the creation of a new initiative called Jobs for the 21st Century. Through this initiative the President specifically called upon community colleges to “train workers for industries that are creating the most new jobs . . .” (State of the Union Address, 2004). The President also urged Congress to support this new initiative through

additional funding for community colleges. While this Presidential charge brings high priority to the important roles that community colleges fill, the charge is loaded with peril. The promise of a financial increase is a welcomed gesture. Unfortunately, the harsh realities are that the additional funds will be a long time in coming and will most likely not be of a volume adequate enough to relieve the financial pressures community colleges are currently encountering, let alone meet additional workforce training demands.

Less than two years after President Bush unveiled the Jobs for the 21st Century initiative, his administration made a move in direct contrast to what had been promised. The Bush administration proposed severe budget cuts for vocational and adult education for the 2007 fiscal year and sustained Work-Study program dollars at current levels for institutions that serve minority populations (Pekow, 2006). The empty, fluctuating promises clearly demonstrate that college administrators will face difficult financial times in the future.

Cejad and Leist (2006) surveyed 202 college officials in nine states to learn what they believed to be the most pressing community college issues. Survey results revealed that top administrators believed that “financial matters continue to dominate the challenges facing community colleges . . .” (p. 265) and suggest that “the greatest challenge facing community colleges in the middle of the decade is the continuation of the commitment to open access and multiple missions” (p. 269).

In the early days of the community college, and particularly between 1960 and 1970, colleges were being opened at a rapid pace to keep up with the promise of a responsive community institution. Even though today's community college leaders do not have to "face the demands of rapid expansion," they must forgo the "blessings of abundant funding" (Roueche, Baker, & Rose, 1989, p. 10) that existed in earlier times. According to a report regarding community college funding by the National Center for Education Statistics, "on average nationally, community colleges receive approximately 42% of their funds from state taxes, 24% from local government, 18% from tuition and fees, 6% from the federal government, and 10% from other sources" (Knapp, Kelly-Reid, & Witmore, 2006, p. 21). In light of the financial frustrations college administrators are experiencing, Roueche and Roueche (2000) make the following recommendations:

More legislators are viewing higher education as a discretionary funding item. State reductions in support of higher education have been severe over the last decade, and there is no end in sight. Community colleges must make new friends in new places, become more entrepreneurial, and move to restore and expand public confidence (p. 22).

Increasing Financial Problems

Over the years community colleges have fulfilled their primary mission by meeting the needs of their local communities through cooperative relationships (LeCroy & Tedrow, 1993). LeCroy and Tedrow (1993) believe that, “both by its placement and its history, the community college movement has created an expectation[,] virtually a psychological contract[,] that it will help communities meet their most pressing needs, needs that cannot be satisfactorily addressed through regular academic programs” (para 5). However, the ability of the community college to continue to meet the needs of the local community is in jeopardy as college resources are stretched thin. In an article about community college funding, Van der Werf (1999) reports that “since 1980, state support has dropped from one-half to one-third of community-college budgets. Support from federal and local sources has not increased” (para 4). As a result of low funds, the community college may well lose its reputation as a responsive community institution because of its inability to continue to finance initiatives.

Community colleges have proven that they are capable of meeting the social and educational needs of their communities, but college leaders need to continue developing partnership programs to contend with the economic constraints which confront them (Milliron & De Los Santos, 2004). It is hoped that ultimately these partnerships will alleviate some financial strain, but more

importantly that they will lead to long-standing relationships with individuals and the business community, offering the promise of further monetary contributions.

In times of financial crisis, it is imperative for college leaders to look at alternative and creative ways to counteract shrinking budgets. One effective way would be to seek potential partners interested in the college curriculum offerings. How one goes about seeking and approaching those potential partners is a delicate matter. Learning basic approaches from previous partnerships is the ideal way to ensure that partnerships begin in an appropriate manner.

Keeping the Door Open – A Critical Mission

Since its inception in 1901, the community college has provided much-needed opportunities for millions of Americans seeking job training, re-careering skills, transfer credit, or life-long learning opportunities. Community colleges were founded on the premise of open access to all. The fundamental goal of the open access ideal was to provide educational programs at low tuition rates, seeking to serve “segments of society traditionally underserved by higher education” (Vaughan, 2006, p. 4). It can be said that “effective community colleges are those that satisfy, preferably delight, the key stakeholders they serve, which include students, faculty, staff, and the community. To accomplish this consistently and enduringly, community colleges must obtain from their staffs the

highest level of energetic, creative, and dedicated performance” (Wharton, 1997, p. 15).

The proportion of community college funding from states has been on a steady decline for over a decade while operational costs are on the rise. As a result, the frequent response from community college administrators is to pass along the budgetary shortfalls to students through tuition increases, capping program enrollments, and refusing admission to students seeking to enter college or specific programs. The College Board report, *Trends in College Pricing* (The College Board, 2005), reveals that “over the past decade, tuition and fees at public two-year colleges have risen at an average rate of 5.1 percent—2.7 percent per year after inflation” (p. 10). To further illustrate this point, the statistics regarding the numbers of students denied admission to programs or colleges in California and North Carolina alone speak for themselves. In 2005, an estimated 175,000 students were turned away from California community colleges, while approximately 56,000 students were turned away from community colleges in North Carolina (Evelyn, 2004; Roueche & Jones, 2005). Sadly, those students being turned away are most likely those for whom the community college was originally designed—those who might not have a chance at an educational opportunity without access to the community college. A recent article by George Boggs (2006), President and CEO of the American Association of Community Colleges, noted that “sharp increases in student tuition costs have made it more difficult for students from low-income families to attend college or to remain

enrolled. Students were turned away from open-access community colleges during this last economic downturn because the institutions did not have capacity to offer needed classes” (p. 15).

In light of funding shortfalls, maintaining the promise of the open door has become a critical challenge for college administrators and will soon become a critical issue for those communities served by community colleges. These issues challenge the underpinnings of the community college mission which is founded on the conviction that “open access to higher education, as practiced by the community college, is a manifestation of the belief that a democracy can thrive, indeed survive, only if people are educated to their fullest potential” (Vaughan, 2006, p. 4). This compounding issue is not merely community college centric, but will possibly have negative long-term effects on society as a whole.

Building Partnerships, Alliances, and Collaborations

In *The Community College: Values, Vision, and Vitality*, author Edmund Gleazer (1980) devoted an entire chapter to encouraging community college leaders to participate in collaborations with community agencies. Gleazer’s emphatic encouragement came after a survey revealed that cooperative alliances had been forged between community colleges and various community entities for a number of years, yet colleges were slow to recognize and celebrate these partnerships. This lack of focus seemed to indicate that perhaps partnerships were

not central to the community college mission. Gleazer contended that “one of the great values in relating to other community agencies and organizations is the possibility that the college is acquiring an extended ‘family’ of learners and providers of education, not merely an individual student” (p. 63).

In 1988, at the encouragement of the nationwide Commission on the Future of Community Colleges, colleges began to look at creating partnerships with community businesses with the hope of creating workforce development programs (Kasper, 2002/2003). In the 1990’s, the notion of creating partnerships began to burgeon and spread across the nation. An entrepreneurial spirit was beginning to emerge from leaders faced with finding solutions to financial disparities. These creative solutions were being dubbed partnerships, alliances, and collaborations. In *The Company We Keep: Collaboration in the Community College* (1995) Taber states that:

There is not a consistent vocabulary to use, a consensus about what this expanded involvement with the community means, or any way to describe the community college’s role. Nor is there a consensus among community college educators as to whether these partnerships and collaborative efforts are consistent with the community college mission . . . (p. 26).

Taber further states that these partnerships should be further investigated, as it is felt that these collaborations will be “part of the major transformation in the societal role of the community college” (p. 26).

Over the past 10 to 15 years greater attention has been placed on building community college partnerships to leverage resources more effectively.

Partnerships range in size and scope from relationships developed with individual donors, to collaborations with large corporations, or even alliances with other institutions of higher education. There is no limit to the partnership possibilities that exist when innovation is the driving force behind decision-making.

Entrepreneurial and Transformational Leadership

It is nearly impossible to build a healthy, noteworthy partnership without solid leadership to support it. The expectation of today's college leaders is that they will become entrepreneurs and transformational leaders for their colleges, leading them to opportunities for greater potential to meet the needs of the community in which they serve. The most effective leadership styles that would benefit the creation of partnerships would be a combination of both entrepreneurial and transformational styles (Glass & Jackson, 1998b). Glass and Jackson define transformational leaders as individuals who "are change-oriented, articulate a vision, and gain a sense of direction as they look to the future to determine the needs of their constituencies" (para 16). According to Glass and Jackson (1998b), entrepreneurialism is:

. . . based upon open systems thinking, it involves opportunism, innovation, and risk-taking. Entrepreneurial leaders are not as

concerned with vision but are more oriented to mission. They thrive in unstable, uncertain environments because they recognize opportunities and devise ways to capitalize on them (para 19).

Additionally, entrepreneurial leaders are focused on fulfilling the mission of the organization. These college leaders are imbued with an attitude of positive change, a leadership characteristic that must be espoused by all college faculty and staff.

An entrepreneurial community college president is one of the most pivotal players in the establishment of partnerships (Ryan & Palmer, 2005). The key to entrepreneurialism is to create profitable and mutually beneficial relationships through intelligent risk-taking. It is evident that through partnerships common goals can be reached more effectively through investing collective resources than through individual efforts (Buettner, D. L., Morrison, M. C., & Wasicek, M., 2002).

Roueche, Baker and Rose (1989) believe that in this time of entrepreneurialism and free spiritedness, colleges are experiencing change like never before and emphasize:

We have entered into a new era of leadership in which presidents must develop and communicate their vision, mobilize people in new directions, and convert followers into leaders. These leaders must be able to empower others to meet the dual demands of

access and excellence, for they are the keys to successful change (p. 10).

Leaders are being called upon to provide transformational leadership, marshalling the skills, abilities, knowledge, and energy of college employees, and encouraging them to reach for higher and broader overall results for the institution. While not all leaders possess these necessary skills, many who aspire to become transformational leaders can acquire them. The process of being seen as a transformational leader requires one to have a broad understanding of the organizational culture, the external environment, and the human resources within the organization. Sergiovanni (Hanson, 2003) provides a precise definition of what being a successful transformational leader would entail:

The transformational leader must be prepared to conduct strategic long-term planning, read the changing nature of external and internal situations, and manage organizational culture variables to align them with action plans. The idea of transformation calls for energizing personnel to make a united response to a higher level of goals common to all those associated with the teaching-learning process (p. 178).

In *Shared vision: Transformational Leadership in American Community Colleges*, Roueche, Baker and Rose (1989) define a transformational leader as an individual who possesses the capability to:

1. Work with other college personnel to meet the college mission through the generation of positive ethics, approaches, and perspectives.
2. Dedicate himself or herself to bringing forth change in the institution for the greater good of the organization.
3. Maintain clear focus directed toward meeting the college vision, mission, and values.
4. Understand the importance of teamwork while seeking and valuing the input of others, and respecting individual ideas and contributions.
5. Hold himself or herself and others to high standards necessary for achieving the goal at hand (pp. 11-13).

Entrepreneurial leaders and transformational leaders are similar in many ways; both are focused on instituting change. Roueche, Baker and Rose (1989) aptly characterize transformational leaders as those who “possess imagination and creativity that, when combined with their ability to interrelate with their organizations or institutions, provide a climate conducive to new beginnings” (p. 289). They further state that “transformational leaders have a vision of what their college can become. They are willing to take risks and commit their colleges to new directions that incorporate the needs of their communities” (p. 13).

College leaders cannot accomplish these endeavors alone. Wharton (1997) calls the entire college personnel into action by stating that “to accomplish this

consistently and enduringly, community colleges must obtain from their staffs the highest level of energetic, creative, and dedicated performance” (p. 15). A transformational leader understands that many individuals are resistant to change and, therefore, must be willing to provide opportunities for coaching to assist those individuals in understanding the greater good behind the change. A transformational leader understands that considerable time is needed for changes to take place and is willing to move forward at an appropriate pace (Roueche, Baker, & Rose, 1989).

By now it is a widely recognized fact that community college presidents are being required to demonstrate a new skill set compared with what was required of a president even 15 to 20 years ago. With regard to the changing needs of leadership, Phelan (2005) believes that “given the ever-changing social dynamic associated with institutional direction and financial health, essential skill sets for all presidents must expand beyond those of simply lobbying for legislative support, raising tuition and fees, and pursuing additional local tax dollars” (p. 88).

The American Association of Community Colleges agreed that today’s leaders are being held accountable for extended skill sets and in April 2005, adopted a list of core competencies deemed to be essential for community college leaders. A task force, Leading Forward, was created to bring together members representing all facets of education from across the nation to discuss primary leadership skills necessary for community colleges. Meetings and surveys generated by participants led to a list of six essential competencies determined to

be critical to the success of community college leaders. The following list and definitions were put forth by the American Association of Community Colleges (2005a):

Organizational Strategy – An effective community college leader strategically improves the quality of the institution, protects the long-term health of the organization, promotes the success of all students, and sustains the community college mission, based on knowledge of the organization, its environment, and future trends (p. 5).

Resource Management – An effective community college leader equitably and ethically sustains people, processes, and information as well as physical and financial assets to fulfill the mission, vision, and goals of the community college (p. 5).

Communication – An effective community college leader uses clear listening, speaking, and writing skills to engage in honest, open dialogue at all levels of the college and its surrounding community, to promote the success of all students, and to sustain the community college mission (p. 6).

Collaboration – An effective community college leader develops and maintains responsive, cooperative, mutually beneficial, and ethical internal and external relationships that nurture diversity, promote the success of all students, and sustain the community college mission (p. 6).

Community College Advocacy – An effective community college leader understands, commits to, and advocates for the mission, vision, and goals of the community college (p. 7).

Professionalism – An effective community college leader works ethically to set high standards for self and others, continuously improve self and surroundings, demonstrate accountability to and for the institution, and ensure the long-term viability of the college and community (p. 7).

Former Leading Forward task force manager, Ottenritter (2006), believes the list of competencies will provide leaders a framework with which they can groom future leaders and hone their own skills.

Roueche, Baker, and Rose (1989) agree that “the challenge and responsibility of community college leadership is to create vision for excellence within the context of institutional problems and characteristics” (p. 11). Leaders

who possess core values commensurate with those outlined by the American Association of Community Colleges will be well-suited to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

Philanthropy

Despite the fact that community college administrators have made headway in the creation of alliances with outside constituencies over the past 15 years, there is still much room for improvement. External entities providing monetary support to higher education include alumni, other individuals, corporations, foundations, religious organizations, and other organizations. The Council for Aid to Education reports that in 2004-05, voluntary support monies contributed to higher education increased by 3.1% over the previous year, totaling almost \$21 billion dollars. Community colleges have realized an increase in giving of 13.8% with dollars totaling nearly \$170 million ("The 2006-7 almanac", 2007). Monies contributed to community colleges account for a mere .81% of the reported annual total. Table 1 provides a snapshot of voluntary support as distributed across institutions.

Table 1: Voluntary Support by Type of Institution, 2004-5

Type of institution	Number of institutions	Amount	Average per institution	1-year change in average
All institutions (4-year, 2-year, Public, and Private)	1,005	\$20,940,046,000	\$20,836,000	+3.1%
Two- year Public	122	\$169,935,000	\$1,393,000	+13.8%

Source: The Chronicle of Higher Education, 53(1), 30.

Funding and enrollment numbers seem disconnected when community colleges represent 25% of all educational institutions in America, second only to private universities ("Measuring up: The national report card on higher education", 2006), but receive less than 1% of all private financial support.

According to the Council for the Aid to Education, alumni were responsible for the largest percentage of voluntary support at institutions of higher education, contributing 28% of gifts reported in 2004-2005 ("The 2006-7 almanac", 2007). However, community colleges have struggled historically to harness the support of alumni due to inadequate tracking of graduates and the inability to make life-long connections with students. Community college graduates often do not feel an emotional connection or sense of obligation to give to their alma mater.

The Council for Aid to Education ("The 2006-7 almanac", 2007) also reports that in 2004-05, private foundations were reported to be the second largest contributors to higher education institutions, donating 27% of the overall totals. One might question whether community colleges are receiving their fair share of the foundation dollars coming to higher education. A cursory review of philanthropic totals would suggest that community colleges are not receiving money from these groups.

The small percentage of philanthropy received by community colleges suggests that college administrators are not reaching out to external constituencies effectively. Jackson and Glass (2000) suggest that perhaps there may be other peripheral issues affecting giving, such as public misperceptions about adequate funding or second-rate instruction, that may impede the administration's ability to enter into relationships and partnerships.

Voluntary support to institutions of higher education is critical. According to a report by the Council for the Aid to Education (Kaplan, 2007):

Voluntary support accounts for less than 10 percent of expenditures, even in years when giving increases ahead of inflation. Most institutions raise a small percentage of their expenditures from voluntary support. And, in fact, a large part of voluntary support is earmarked by donors for endowments and other capital purpose uses and is not used to offset expenditures.

So, for annual operating expenses, institutions must look elsewhere for revenue. Voluntary support could never grow sufficiently to become the primary solution to budgeting challenges (p. 5).

Implications for Building Partnerships

The development of quality partnerships allows a community college to meet the needs of the community by expanding its resources while maintaining its mission (Sink Jr. & Jackson, 2002). Kisker & Carducci (2003) reviewed the organizational structures instituted during the creation of successful collaborations with community colleges and businesses, and purport that the most critical factor is in recognizing “the existence of a community need or opportunity that calls for collective action” (para 7). Kisker & Carducci (2003) follow up this recommendation with four additional important points:

1. There should be a shared mission, vision, and goal between the parties involved.
2. The partnership must be mutually beneficial.
3. There must be effective leadership in place.
4. There must be shared authority and accountability from both sides (para 7-15).

The college mission should remain first and foremost in the minds of college administrators. If the college is to be responsive to the community by

providing programs that meet community needs, the college must be able to identify the existence of those needs first. The mission should be emphasized through external relationships, college goals, both long-term and short-term, and should be at the forefront of fundraising activities (Hall, 2002). To understand community and business needs college administrators must be civically involved and connected with business leaders to foster discussions regarding societal needs, economic factors, and labor issues (Kisker, C. B. & Carducci, R., 2003). College leaders must be ready to state the possible contributions each potential partner might be able to contribute to the college and must view each personal interaction with business leaders as an opportunity to propel both entities into a relationship that will better the entire community (Roueche & Roueche, 2000).

Fostering relationships and courting would-be partners demands a leader with an appropriate amount of people skills, charisma, and marketing savvy to properly present the college's credentials. Prosperous partnerships can be built more easily when the college has a reputation for being an institution which has solid relationships within the community, has effective programs that reach into the community, and is responsive to the district which it serves (Nielsen, 1994; Ryan & Palmer, 2005). The cultivation of positive and strong relationships is essential for the creation of future partnerships (Flannigan, Greene, & Jones, 2005).

Looking to a nationwide higher education fundraising study conducted by Cook and Lasher, one can see the overlap between sound fundraising practices

and the principles of courting potential partnerships. Cook and Lasher (1996) concluded five major observations from their study:

1. Fundraising is a team effort.
2. An institution's president is typically the central player on the fund raising team.
3. Presidents should focus their fundraising attention and efforts on major gifts and administrative leadership.
4. Academic quality and institutional prestige are of critical importance in higher education fundraising.
5. Fundraising is institution specific and, more importantly, context or situation specific (p. 33).

These five major points are findings that can be put into practice when establishing collaborative affiliations.

Kanter, a professor from the Harvard Business School, observed the interactions of 37 companies that had relationships with outside organizations. He (Kanter, 1994) discovered that there were three prominent fundamental characteristics evident in these relationships:

1. They yielded benefits for both partners. They were not viewed as a deal but as living systems that evolved progressively in their possibilities. Beyond the immediate reasons for entering into a relationship, the connection offers options for the future, opening new doors and unforeseen opportunities.

2. Successful alliances involved collaboration and the ability to create value together. An alliance was viewed as an exchange in which both parties value the contributions of the other.
3. Interpersonal connections were critical and internal infrastructures enhanced opportunities to learn (p. 97).

Kanter's findings reveal that there is more to a partnership than the mere exchange of money. Each partnership has the potential to bring "an exchange of expertise, personnel, facilities, or other resources [that] can be equally fruitful" (Nielsen, 1994). Additionally, these alliances have the potential to generate equipment acquisitions, capital improvements, high visibility within the community, a new marketing focus for the college, and increased community awareness (Kisker & Carducci, 2003). Often, parties simply profit from the mere name association of a partner, which can mean that the donor benefits from their association with the college and vice versa. Buettner, Morrison, and Wasicek (2002) warn that "choosing *a* partner or choosing *to* partner should always involve evaluation of the resulting partnership's effect on all partners' reputations and credibility" (p. 6). Without the commitment from both parties, partnerships will not thrive.

Partnerships at Work

Los Angeles City College (Tyler, 2002)

In 1997, the Los Angeles City College campus was in decline, inhabited by gangs, and losing the ability to provide a safe learning environment for students. College officials knew that something had to change to repair both the physical damage and the stigma placed upon the college by the community and the college employees. It was deemed that the four and a half acre plot of land at the front of the campus which had laid fallow for many years should undergo an extreme facelift.

Administrators began to look for ideas that would yield a drastic change at the front entrance of the campus. Purely by chance, college administrators were approached by a private developer from the community with an idea as to how they might be able to remedy the deteriorating campus frontage to benefit both the community and the college.

Of pivotal importance was the reality that the college had no money to dedicate to this endeavor; therefore, college administrators sought a partner that was willing to underwrite the entire project. The preliminary design for transforming the time-ravaged plot of land into a golf course looked promising. The venture had the prospect of providing multiple benefits to both parties:

1. A place for community members to golf—up until this point the community did not possess any public golf courses.
2. A location for holding physical education courses in golf instruction.
3. Additional parking for students—on-campus parking was depleted causing frustration for students.
4. Campus beautification—because golf courses must be manicured daily, the appearance of the front of the college would instantaneously receive the much needed attention it deserved.
5. Security—with gangs encroaching on college grounds the college needed to develop new ways to provide security. The new golf course would house a security satellite office with added guards and the extra lights in the golf course parking lot would both contribute to a safer campus.
6. A way to generate revenue—the established agreement between the college and the developer specified that a percentage of fees collected from the golf course would go directly to the college.

The developer believed in the project whole-heartedly, had confidence that the project would hold benefits for the entire community, and offered to advance

money to the college for the initial clean-up of the barren four and a half acre plot of land. The partnership was formed, and work commenced.

With this partnership, all preliminary goals were realized without any cost to the college. Two additional benefits to the college were a new marketing feature and improved morale and perceptions among college personnel, students, and community members. This partnership stands as an example of a union that produced more than just financial gains. The collaboration raised mental and emotional spirits, as well.

Cy-Fair College (Pickelman, 2005)

In 2003, the North Harris Montgomery Community College District opened the doors of their newest college, Cy-Fair College in Houston, Texas. Cy-Fair was on the cutting edge of the latest trends in education and slated to be one of the first colleges that would incorporate learning communities into virtually every aspect of its existence. Cy-Fair college opened its doors to almost 7,000 students during the first year of operation.

During early construction phases of the new community college, college officials were asked to consider entering into a partnership with the county to provide a community library on the college property. At the time, the community did not have a library, and it was evident that there was a dire need for such services.

Negotiations began, and the college agreed to venture into this collaborative project. The county made a \$4,291,000 contribution to the college to off-set the costs of architectural changes and enlargement of the planned college library by 28,000 feet. Additionally, the county agreed to provide and fund several staff positions to assist in the operations of the library.

This partnership between the college and the county yielded many benefits, not only to the college, but to the community-at-large. Benefits included:

1. Expanded library size
2. Additional books and resources
3. A café located within the library
4. Parking for patrons
5. 300 computers for use by students and community members

This partnership has benefited to both the college and the community. The college gives back to the community, and the community visits the college campus, possibly one day returning to enroll in classes.

Florida Community College at Jacksonville (Wallace, 2005)

The offset printing program at Florida Community College at Jacksonville was obsolete due to the changes in technology in the copying industry. The reproduction industry was becoming more digitized. Therefore, machines were

dramatically changing, and so too should the training that would accompany the machines.

During discussions between a college leader and a Xerox representative from a local facility, it was agreed that the two would partner to create a new program that would meet the needs of this changing industry better. Since the college already had an offset printing program in place, it was agreed that the program curriculum would be modified and the facilities would be overhauled. Xerox agreed to provide curriculum assistance, staffing, and state-of-the-art equipment to the college. Once the program was implemented, there were a number of benefits:

1. The digital aspects of the program drew additional student enrollment.
2. The staff from Xerox provided an abundance of expertise.
3. The college saved money on copying expenses while minimizing delivery time by utilizing the equipment.

Not only did the students and Xerox benefit from this partnership, but so did the college. With these programmatic changes, Florida Community College at Jacksonville was once again able to meet the needs of the local workforce.

Conclusion

Community colleges face many challenges, but providing programs that meet the needs of the community in times of inadequate funding might be the biggest hurdle. President and CEO of the American Association of Community Colleges, George Boggs (2006), believes that “it is important for all to understand that higher education is an investment in our future as a society as well as a benefit to individual citizens” (p. 15). Insufficient funding ultimately will affect everything the community college does or does not do, including programs the college can offer and the number of graduates that can make a contribution to the local community.

College representatives must begin to educate citizens about the role which the college plays in the local community. It is imperative that the citizenry realize that all funds provided to the community college are returned to the community in many forms. College graduates who enter or return to the local workforce contribute to the local tax base. Those tax dollars can then be redistributed to the college, creating a monetary cycle that continues to reap benefits to the local constituency. “Studies have shown that each dollar invested in a community college yields taxpayers \$3 in benefits”(American Association of Community Colleges, 2005b, p. 9). Additionally, community college students usually stay in the area in which they receive their education, resulting in a contribution to the local economy and tax base.

The community college is an important aspect of the community. The public must believe that notion and concentrate on the fact that “community colleges are still America’s best hope for a competitive workforce and a strong economy in the new millennium” (Roueche & Roueche, 2000, p. 22). Partnerships, collaborations, and alliances can weave together the various pillars of the community and in turn create a synergistic effect that will benefit all.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research design utilized by the author to investigate the details of the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology. The details of the benefits derived from the use of a qualitative research design are described. As outlined in Chapter One, the purpose of this research was to examine the use of creative partnerships as a means of developing and providing innovative programs that meet the needs of the continually shifting business environment, while contending with past and probable future shrinking funding patterns for community colleges. The author explored the details of the creation of the partnership through the use of qualitative methods. These methods afforded the researcher the flexibility to explore many facets of the partnership through the insights of others, document review, and observation.

Unit of Analysis

This researcher investigated the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology at Guilford Technical Community College, (High Point, NC).

Guilford Technical Community College was founded in 1958, with 50 students. Today, it enrolls 12,381 students in curriculum programs and 23,330 students in continuing education programs (Guilford Technical Community College, 2006a). The Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology was created in 2000, with an initial enrollment of 84 students. 262 students enrolled in the 2005-2006 academic year.

Research Design

The author employed a qualitative approach to this study. Qualitative research can be described as research that seeks to reveal “meaning that is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world” (Merriam, 2002, p. 3). Within qualitative research, the researcher works to provide the most in-depth information available regarding the research subject. Further elaboration by Mertens (2005) offers a definition indicating that the researcher maintains “an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them” (p. 229).

Qualitative research is a broad term which “encompasses several philosophical or theoretical orientations” (Merriam, 2002, p. 15). It also utilizes a variety of research designs such as “a basic interpretive study, phenomenology, grounded theory, case study, narrative analysis, ethnography, critical qualitative

research, and postmodern or poststructural research” (p. 15). Though many research designs may be selected for use, the overarching theme of qualitative research is that of searching for meaning and in-depth comprehension of the phenomenon.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) refer to the qualitative researcher as a bricoleur, meaning a researcher who is capable of applying a variety of different tools to one specific situation in an effort to extract the necessary data. A qualitative researcher strategically uses various methods to ferret out the information which is sought in order to understand the phenomenon completely.

Common types of qualitative research, viewed by Mertens (2005) to be “‘state of the art’ in educational and psychological qualitative research” (pp. 234-235) include ethnographic, case study, participatory research, clinical research, and focus groups. The author has developed her research through the use of the case study approach. Merriam (2002) describes the case study as “an intensive description and analysis of a phenomenon or social unit such as an individual, group, institution, or community” (p. 8). The use of the case study approach affords the researcher the ability to concentrate on a single phenomenon, resulting in a greater ability to elicit a deeper understanding of the subject being studied (Merriam, 2002).

To develop this case study fully, the author maintained a naturalistic perspective. Patton (1990) refers to naturalistic inquiry as the ability of the researcher to study “real-world situations as they unfold naturally; non-

manipulative, unobtrusive, and non-controlling; openness to whatever emerges—lack of predetermined constraints on outcomes” (p. 40). Simply put, a naturalistic perspective allows the researcher the ability to gather information in a natural setting, using him or herself as the primary instrument for data collection from interviews, remaining flexible and inquisitive, allowing the study to emerge, while remaining cognizant of the potential for serendipity.

Data Collection

Data collection methods included individual interviews, review of documents and archival records, and participant observation. Data collection was conducted over a period of five months, October 2006 through February 2007.

Interviews

A total of 23 individuals were selected for interviews during the research process. Individuals were selected purposively based on their involvement in the creation of, maintenance of, or participation in the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology.

Interviews were conducted with Don Cameron, President of Guilford Technical Community College; Larry Gatlin, Entertainer; Lee Kinard, Executive Assistant to the President; Jeff Little, Department Chair of the Larry Gatlin

School of Entertainment Technology; members of the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology Advisory Board; Carolyn Schneider, Division Chair of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Todd Dupree, former Program Coordinator, and other college personnel who offered pertinent information regarding this research area. Additionally, selected students, alumni, and full-time faculty of the Entertainment Technology program were interviewed.

Interviews with students, college faculty, and administrators were conducted on the college campus in private rooms and offices to secure complete confidentiality. Participants were briefed as to the purpose of the study and the intended use of the information gained through the interview process. Interviews with advisory committee members were conducted on site at their places of employment. Interviews were conducted in private rooms to ensure full confidentiality. Interviews with alumni were conducted by telephone or at the alumnus' place of employment. Each interview was audio recorded to allow for free-flowing discussion without concern for copious note taking by the researcher. Interviews were transcribed word-for-word by the researcher.

Observations

Researcher observations included participation in an advisory board meeting for the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology and classroom observations. The researcher maintained an observational stance as an outsider

rather than a participant. However, when opportunities to participate in casual conversation with students presented themselves, the researcher interacted and conversed freely, and took field notes based on conversations and observations as necessary.

Research Questions and Methods

Initial interview questions were designed by the researcher (see Appendix A), to cover a broad range of subjects with interviewees of varying backgrounds and involvement with the program. The naturalistic approach allowed for formulation of subsequent questions resulting from individual interviewee responses. The naturalistic approach softened the question-and-answer interview structure and created a dialogue exchange that flowed conversationally. The relaxed structure provided a calm atmosphere for interviewees, resulting in a better exchange of information.

The research questions for the case study have been divided into multiple categories to investigate the components which collectively result in the creation of the partnership comprehensively. Each of the research segments ultimately lead to answering the overarching question regarding the value of partnerships in providing programs that meet the needs of the community-at-large.

The research categories, general questions, and research methods are delineated as follows:

Idea Generation and Initial Partnership

Research Methods

Interviews were conducted and audio recorded with Don Cameron, President of Guilford Technical Community College, and Larry Gatlin, the primary partner in this collaborative project.

1. What was the historical development of the Larry Gatlin

School of Entertainment Technology?

- a. How was the program idea generated?
- b. What were the needs of the immediate community and the entertainment industry?
- c. What was the impetus for contacting Larry Gatlin?
- d. What are Larry Gatlin's obligations to the program?
- e. What considerations and negotiations were made during the initial discussions regarding the partnership between Guilford Technical Community College and Larry Gatlin?

Program Structure

Research Methods

Interviews were conducted and audio recorded with Don Cameron, President of Guilford Technical Community College, and Larry Gatlin, the primary partner in this project. A review and analysis of supporting documentation provided by Guilford Technical Community College was conducted.

2. What is the organizational structure for the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology?
 - a. How was the organizational design determined?
 - b. Does the program have an advisory board? If so, what is its composition?
 - c. What contributions has the advisory board made to the program?

Curriculum

Research Methods

Interviews were conducted and audio recorded with Don Cameron, President of Guilford Technical Community College; Lee Kinard, Executive Assistant to the President; Jeff Little, Department Chair of the Larry Gatlin

School of Entertainment Technology; members of the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology Advisory Board; and other college personnel with pertinent information directly related to this area of research. A review and analysis of college organizational charts, syllabi, and other college documentation were conducted.

3. How was the curriculum designed to meet the needs of the industry and the community?
 - a. How were the educational options designed?
 - i. Recording Engineering
 - ii. Concert Sound and Lighting
 - iii. Music Performance
 - iv. Artist Management
 - b. How were the faculty recruited to fill these unique teaching positions?
 - c. How is the curriculum assessed?
 - d. How was the program funded?
 - e. How does the college anticipate funding the future technological needs of the program?

Program Appeal

Research Methods

Interviews were conducted and audio recorded with Lee Kinard, Executive Assistant to the President; Jeff Little, Department Chair of the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology; Carolyn Schneider, Division Chair of Arts and Sciences; and other college personnel with applicable relevant information. A review and analysis of the college catalog, accreditation guidelines, and other college documentation were conducted.

4. What was the appeal of this program for students?
 - a. What was the motivation of students for enrolling in this program?
 - b. Once students have graduated from the program, do they feel prepared for work in the industry?
 - c. Does the college track the progress of alumni?

Results of the Partnership

Research Methods

Interviews were conducted and audio recorded with current students and alumni who are/were enrolled in each of the four entertainment program options;

Jeff Little, Department Chair of the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology; and other college personnel who were able to provide information appropriate to this area of research. A review and analysis of college enrollment and graduation and enrollment statistics, marketing materials, and other documentation were conducted.

5. How do all of these elements converge to create a unique partnership?
 - a. What benefits have been realized by the college, the community, the entertainment industry, and Larry Gatlin since the formation of this partnership?
 - b. In what ways has the community supported the creation of this partnership?
 - c. What are the overall benefits of this partnership?
 - d. Does this partnership afford the college an opportunity to provide more programming options to students?
 - e. What can be learned, and possibly replicated, from this study at other institutions?

Limitations of Methodology

It should be noted that while qualitative research is a sound method of data collection, some minor limitations remain. Patton (1990) notes that “in qualitative

inquiry the researcher is the instrument. Validity in qualitative methods, therefore, hinges to a great extent on the skill, competence; and rigor of the person doing fieldwork” (p. 14). With respect to interviewing, the quality of the research depends on the researcher’s ability to begin with prescribed questions, while taking the opportunity to probe further by following tangents presented by interviewee responses.

Credibility

The notion of credibility, or “activities that make it more likely that credible findings and interpretations will be produced” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 301), is paramount in the research process. Techniques recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985) for ensuring credibility include:

Member checks – The periodic checking of “data, analytic categories, interpretations, and conclusions [which] are tested with members of those stakeholding groups from whom the data were originally collected . . .” (p. 314). Whether formal or informal, Lincoln and Guba maintain that member checks are “the most crucial technique for establishing credibility” (p. 314).

Prolonged engagement – Investing enough time to learn the culture, establish trust, and sense distortions in information.

Persistent observation – “. . . is to identify those characteristics and elements in the situation that are most relevant to the problem or issue being pursued and focusing on them in detail” (p. 304).

Triangulation – The use of “different data collection modes (interview, questionnaire, observation, testing) or different designs” (p. 306).

Mathison (1988) maintains that “regardless of which philosophical, epistemological, or methodological perspectives an evaluator is working from, it is necessary to use multiple methods and sources of data in the execution of a study in order to withstand critique by colleagues” (p. 13). The methods of prolonged engagement, persistent observation, and triangulation offer sufficient means for accurate and thorough assessment.

The researcher employed all four of the aforementioned methods of data collection outlined by Lincoln and Guba to ensure credibility throughout the process of data collection. Member checks were frequently used to make certain that the interpretation of data was correct. Occasionally, member checks were required to validate differing information that was collected.

Prolonged engagement proved to be one of the most valuable tools in data collection. Throughout a four-month period at GTCC and LGSET the researcher was able to establish personal and comfortable relationships with administrators, students, and faculty members. As a result of these familiar relationships the

researcher was able to observe classroom activities without causing students uneasiness or apprehension. Students were relaxed and comfortable with the researcher's presence and were therefore willing to speak openly regarding the subject during class settings and interviews.

As a result of prolonged engagement the researcher established trust with various personnel within the college which resulted in a greater abundance of data collected. Trust was the most critical factor—individuals who had an investment in the LGSET were willing to openly share valuable information and insights.

Prolonged engagement and persistent observation worked in conjunction with one another. Due to the personal relationships developed, it was easy for the researcher to identify significant elements worthy of greater investigation.

Triangulation was utilized by the researcher through observation, interviews, and review of artifacts.

Conclusion

A case study implies that the researcher needs to become a part of the phenomenon being studied. To research thoroughly a researcher should use more than the mind to investigate a phenomenon, rather the sense of sight, sound, and touch to experience the subject of the study fully. Coupled with these first-hand experiences, the researcher must converse with participants and developers, and explore and analyze written artifacts. In keeping with these principles, the

researcher conducted comprehensive interviews, observed classroom activities and lectures, and reviewed and analyzed documentation. The compilation of each of these pieces is qualitative research.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

Community colleges are mired in the continual struggle to hold true to their mission of open access while seeking alternative funding sources to support programming. Over the past two decades colleges have experienced a decrease of local funding and a disproportionate balance between the increasing numbers of enrolled students and total state support. Colleges simply are trying to sustain more programming and facilities with less funding. Voorhees (2001) aptly speaks to the financial strain community colleges are facing:

At the beginning of the new century, the nation's public two-year colleges stand at the financial crossroads. On one hand, the need for the services and education they provide in a rapidly changing local, regional, national and international environment continues to accelerate. On the other hand, community colleges now draw less of their total operating revenues from taxpayers than at any other time in their histories. If these recent trends are harbingers, the finance of community colleges will become even more critical and problematic in the foreseeable future (p. 480).

To add to the seriousness of the situation, the global economy is expanding rapidly, taking with it numerous local job opportunities from throughout the United States. In response to this exodus, politicians, community leaders, and other individuals are calling upon the community college to offer educational programs that may help alleviate the migration of some jobs.

The literature review revealed that one possible solution for colleges would be through partnerships. Additionally, the literature revealed that the position of college president is primarily responsible for the creation of successful partnerships. The president must possess entrepreneurial attributes and have a vision that can be communicated clearly to the potential partner and other members of the college. Without an effective leader, the ability to form lasting partnerships is unlikely.

Examining the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology at Guilford Technical Community College as a case study has allowed the researcher to explore the many elements found in the literature review. Specific elements include the formation of partnerships, leadership attributes, and educational programming that meets community needs.

The Genesis

A few years have passed since the President of Guilford Technical Community College (GTCC), Dr. Donald Cameron, dreamed of a School of

Country Music. The idea germinated with Cameron's love of country music, coupled with his ability to visualize future program expansion that would benefit both the community and the college. It was within his soul. During the early years Cameron wrote letters to country music singers such as Dolly Parton, Charlie Pride, and Loretta Lynn, but failed to mail them for fear that his dreams were not conceptualized fully and that these entertainers would not take his ideas seriously. However, Cameron's unrelenting dedication to his belief that a country music program would benefit Guilford Technical Community College finally paid off during a chance meeting in late 1998 with Grammy Award-winning entertainer, Larry Gatlin.

Gatlin was in High Point, North Carolina, to perform at a Rotary luncheon being hosted by one of Cameron's friends, Nido Qubein, President of High Point University. The night before Gatlin's performance, Qubein hosted a private party in Gatlin's honor, and Cameron attended. Cameron thought this might be a good opportunity to speak directly with Gatlin about his dream for a School of Country Music and took the initiative to gain Qubein's blessings to talk business with Gatlin. Cameron approached Gatlin and struck up a conversation. It was during this meeting with Gatlin that Cameron finally had the opportunity to share his ideas for the School of Country Music. Gatlin agreed that conceptually the idea was warranted and agreed to meet with Cameron for more extensive discussions upon his return to the area approximately two months later.

Larry Gatlin's Vision

Upon Gatlin's return to North Carolina in early 1999, Cameron spent considerable time showing him around the Guilford Technical Community College campus and talking about current programs. During early discussions with Gatlin, Cameron was shocked to hear him say, "I hate [the idea of] country music." However, this statement led Gatlin to explain further that Cameron's idea for a School of Country Music was an idea with great potential. However, Gatlin was concerned that focusing specifically on country music was too myopic. He encouraged Cameron to think past the country music performers as the primary program focus. Gatlin began sharing his ideas and talking about other aspects of the music industry such as cosmetology, song writing, graphic arts, management, and technical skills. Gatlin told Cameron that less than half a percent of students who might come out of a program focused on country music would ever perform on the Grand Ole Opry stage, but plenty of other jobs were available within the industry. Cameron quickly realized that Gatlin's perspective was much broader than his own and agreed that the program should encompass more than just country music. Even though Cameron's initial vision had now changed as a result of Gatlin's input, he quickly realized that he and Gatlin shared a similar vision.

Cameron took the opportunity to ask Gatlin if the college could use his name in the program title and promised in return that the college would name the school in accordance with Gatlin's wishes. Gatlin felt strongly that the school

should encompass more aspects of the music industry. Therefore, Gatlin felt the school name should include the word technology. Gatlin was humbled by the grand gesture and agreed with little hesitation. The partnership was born. The Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology (LGSET) was becoming a reality.

A Dream Comes to Fruition

Now that Cameron had secured a partner in Gatlin and the two had discussed ways of making the program more widely encompassing, it was full steam ahead for the program. Cameron was ready to make his long-time dream come true.

As with the development of any new program, there were many details to attend to, many aspects to consider, and numerous tasks to be completed; most of which were completed simultaneously. The first activities on the docket were to determine community needs, create program offerings, and develop an appropriate curriculum. Cameron sought the advice of his Vice President of Instruction for the selection of a campus academic who could lead the charge. Dr. Carolyn Schneider, Division Chair of Arts and Sciences was chosen to lead the curriculum development committee and conduct necessary research for the new program. Two additional faculty members were chosen to assist, Kim Churchill, from Social Sciences, and Lynda Hodge, from Accounting and Business

Administration. A fourth committee member, Todd Dupree, was added to the team when he overheard hallway discussions about the new program and volunteered to be of assistance. Dupree was confident that his background would prove to be of benefit to the college. Dupree's experience as a freelance audio and video recording engineer in the entertainment industry and manager of GTCC's media technology department presented the team with the right set of skills to undertake this project. Dupree was indeed in the right place at the right time.

Additionally, the committee sought the advice of Carl Squires, a program development consultant who was hired to assist the curriculum development committee.

From Texas to Tennessee – The Grand Exploration

The curriculum development committee conducted research on other schools in the United States that offered programs similar to the one they hoped to establish. The committee identified three institutions, South Plains College (SPC) in Levelland, Texas, Middle Tennessee State University (MTU), Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and Austin Community College (ACC), Austin, Texas, as places to visit. Schneider and Dupree contacted each institution and arrangements to tour the programs. After visiting each of the programs, the curriculum development committee was most impressed by the offerings at SPC. SPC had three specific programs focused on various aspects of commercial music, video production, and

sound technology. Additionally, the three programs at SPC worked together to produce a televised concert once a month, raising the visibility of an already established, state-of-the art program that boasts many illustrious graduates.

After touring the programs in Texas and Tennessee, committee members were excited and energized because they could see the potential and possibilities of the new LGSET. The curriculum development team focused its efforts on building a program that encompassed the feedback from Gatlin and incorporated elements borrowed from the SPC program. Schneider and Dupree determined that the most effective way to offer an array of choices to students, and provide the most potential for employment, would be to offer four distinct educational options: entertainment management, performance, sound recording, and lighting (see Appendix B).

In October 1999, GTCC officially announced its decision to establish the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology. Cameron publicly announced his plans to hold the first Entertainment Technology program classes during fall 2000. Cameron was driven to see this dream become a reality.

It's All About the Process

The team began the necessary steps for application to the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) for curriculum program approval. In addition to crafting a purpose and mission for the LGSET, the curriculum

development committee conducted an employment availability survey, a feasibility survey, and began soliciting members for an Advisory Committee.

Employment availability surveys were distributed to recording studios, production companies, venues, and churches in the surrounding area and nearby states. Results from the survey of potential employers revealed that every employer who was contacted, with the exception of one, had current openings or intended to have openings in the near future for employees with developed skills in the entertainment arena. Potential employers gave resounding support for the creation of such a program, and many asked to be briefed as to the progress of the program and to be considered as a co-op site.

Surveys were disseminated to over 1100 students to ascertain interest in the program. Over 400 students responded with interest. An additional 38 interested parties expressed interest as a result of local newspaper coverage.

Getting the Right Advice

Relationships established with individuals in the entertainment industry presented Cameron, Schneider, and Dupree with prospects for the first LGSET Advisory Committee. Cameron, Kinard, Schneider, and Dupree began contacting individuals, determining their willingness to serve in an advisory capacity. Their efforts paid off and a 15 member advisory committee was formed. The committee consisted of 15 representatives from production companies, recording studios, and

radio stations as well as individual performers, and a business agent (see Appendix D).

In October 1999, Gatlin met with the first four members of the board to discuss the role of the advisory committee, details of the program approval process for the state of North Carolina, and potential program direction, and to hear from the program development committee regarding their trips to various schools. Feedback from the first official advisory committee meeting was overwhelmingly positive.

The curriculum development committee worked swiftly and diligently to gather the necessary documentation and submitted GTCC's application to NCCCS on March 15, 2000, just a year and one month after Cameron had established the partnership with Gatlin and five short months after the official program announcement.

Committee Expansion

In February 2000, former local television show anchor, Lee Kinard, began working at GTCC. As a result of his 40 years as host of the local morning show, Kinard brought with him an immeasurable amount of expertise from the television industry. Cameron immediately assigned Kinard as an additional member of the program development committee. Cameron was confident that Kinard would bring new insights to the planning process.

Since the curriculum development committee felt that SPC had a noteworthy program, Cameron thought a campus visit was in order. Shortly after Kinard began working at GTCC, he and Cameron visited SPC in Levelland, Texas, to see firsthand what possibilities lay ahead for the LGSET. Additionally, through a personal connection Cameron had made previously, he and Kinard traveled to Franklin, Tennessee, just twenty minutes outside of Nashville, to tour Dark Horse Recording, a state-of-the-art recording studio owned by Robin Crow, who was subsequently became an Advisory Board member. Cameron and Kinard focused their efforts on examining the recording studios at each facility and discussing potential equipment needs for the LGSET.

A Roof Overhead and Equipment Underfoot

The Building

The Business Careers building on the Jamestown campus was selected as the site for the new LGSET. The building seemed to be an appropriate place for such a program as it contained a small 80 seat auditorium. The building was remodeled to house several classrooms and two recording studios, but Cameron envisioned this as merely a temporary location for the program. His ultimate dream was to construct a new building that would be designed specifically to house the LGSET.

The Technology

The selection of appropriate equipment for the program was made easier due to Dupree's past experience as a roadie in the music industry—an individual primarily responsible for the handling and setting up of equipment for touring bands. His technical knowledge, combined with his connections within the industry, afforded the college and the program immeasurable benefit. Additionally, information gained during visits to SPC and Dark Horse Recording proved to be quite valuable.

Realizing that musical instruments are an integral part of the program, and that not all students can afford to purchase instruments for themselves, the college invested in drums, guitars, keyboards, etc., providing students access to necessary equipment. Overall, the college committed over \$141,000 to acquiring the appropriate equipment and instruments necessary to start the program.

Hiring is Job Number One

Confident that the program application would be approved by the NCCCS, program planning continued to ensure that the college would be ready to offer classes once the approval was received. Therefore, it was time to hire faculty to get this program started.

Kinard was designated as the lead staff member for hiring appropriate personnel. Though many students had expressed interest in the program, involved parties remained unsure as to how many students would enroll in the courses. Conservative enrollment estimates hovered between eight and 25 for the first semester. This would dictate the number of faculty needed to launch the new program.

Dupree was hired as the first Program Coordinator and a search began for a faculty member. Hearing of the faculty opening, a GTCC employee passed word along to his next door neighbor, who contacted her son in California and suggested he apply for the job. Her son was Thomas “TJ” Johnson, a then nineteen-year veteran of the music industry with dreams of returning to North Carolina where he had been raised. Johnson’s credentials included theatrical lighting and production/sound engineering at multiple record labels such as Warner Brothers, Columbia, Motown, Capital, Virgin, etc., with artists of varying genres such as Joe Zawinul and Yoko Ono. Johnson was also a professional musician, performing guitar, keyboards, and vocals on numerous albums, and has played in club and professional bands, appearing on the David Letterman Show and touring North America, Australia, and New Zealand. Johnson prevailed as the top candidate and was hired as the second full-time faculty member for the program. Johnson was instrumental in assisting Dupree in creating and honing details of the technical courses.

Shortly after Dupree and Johnson were in place to work on technical aspects of the program, a search began for a part-time faculty member who could create songwriting courses. Cameron contacted local songwriter and musician, Kristy Jackson, who maintained connections in Nashville and had national songwriting recognition since one of her tunes was recorded by Reba McEntire. In addition to being a performer and songwriter, Jackson owns her own award-winning publishing company and record label. Jackson applied for the position and was soon hired to develop and teach the songwriting courses.

NCCCS Says 'It is a Go!'

In the eleventh hour NCCCS granted approval for the LGSET. GTCC was approved to offer a two-year Associate of Applied Science degree. Though the curriculum development team consisted of six individuals, it was Schneider and Dupree who completed the majority of research and curriculum writing. Without their diligent efforts and enduring energy, the program would not have received approval.

Cameron's dream had indeed become a reality—the program had been approved. Plans underway to begin classes in fall 2000 semester intensified when notice of the approval was received, as the fall 2000 semester was merely weeks away. An abundance of work remained to be completed before classes could commence.

The World Premiere

The fall 2000 semester was an exciting time in GTCC's history. It was about to unveil the first Entertainment Technology program in the state of North Carolina.

On the first day of class, 82 students, a number more than triple previous enrollment estimates, were greeted by not only their faculty, but the college President, and the program's namesake, Larry Gatlin. Gatlin spent time entertaining the students and sharing personal stories. But Gatlin also was interested in hearing from the students. He asked the students directly how many would not be in college if it were not for the creation of the Entertainment Technology program. Student response astounded Gatlin; approximately 75 students declared that they would not be in college if it were not for the Entertainment Technology program; a true testament to the program and its future impact on student lives.

Building for the Future

The college was set for a bond referendum vote in May 2000, and a portion of the monies from that bond were earmarked for the construction of a new building to house the LGSET on the High Point campus.

GTCC had three established campuses in neighboring communities, with the main campus located in Jamestown, and two satellite campuses in Greensboro

and High Point. Cameron believed that the LGSET should be located on the High Point campus for two main reasons: (1) the campus in High Point was relatively new and in need of a signature program to give the campus greater visibility, and (2) Cameron's initial meeting with Gatlin took place in High Point.

The bond passed in May 2000, with \$9.25 million earmarked for the LGSET. A local architectural firm, Hayes-Howell, was hired to design the building. Additionally, the world renowned Walters-Storyk Design Group was hired to handle the acoustical designs of the building.

The architect sought input from various individuals at GTCC during the design phase. Dan Sitko, Construction Manager at GTCC, oversaw the process and solicited input from appropriate individuals: Dupree and Johnson for their knowledge of technical needs, and Cameron for his vision of an amphitheater.

Cameron's association with his friend Qubein proved helpful again during the construction phase of the LGSET. Qubein contacted Cameron and told him that he was bringing Grammy award winner Lee Greenwood to town and thought possibly Cameron would want to meet with him. Cameron quickly agreed to a meeting with Greenwood as he thought this might be an excellent time to ask for Greenwood's personal opinion about the LGSET and its building.

Cameron and Kinard met with Greenwood on the High Point campus, and the three gentlemen toured the building which was slated to open in just a few months. Though the building was not fully complete and the equipment was not in place, Greenwood was amazed at the detail going into the sound booths and

control rooms, as well as the two entertainment venues. The program concept and building made such an impression on Greenwood that he told Cameron that if the college was ever in need of technical expertise related to the LGSET, he would be happy to send some of his technicians to offer assistance.

Construction of the 66,000 square foot building took approximately two years and opened to great fanfare in January 2004. The new building housed:

- Four music labs
- Four rehearsal rooms
- One sound lab
- One lighting lab
- Four control rooms with studios
- A green room with kitchen
- A 225 flexible-seat indoor sound studio
- A 600 fixed-seat outdoor amphitheater with control booth and two lighting towers
- A community room adjacent to the amphitheater
- Multiple offices and classrooms

The Entertainment Technology program occupied approximately half of the building space with additional classrooms dedicated to computer labs, the massage therapy program, and a campus library.

As the building was nearing completion, Program Coordinator Dupree tendered his resignation to accept a management position with a local theater. It was at this juncture that Cameron and Kinard discussed taking the program to a higher level by conducting a national search to fill the new position of Department Chair. The candidate they sought was someone who had a background and connections in the entertainment industry, and was knowledgeable about lighting and sound recording.

Through his connections in Nashville, Cameron began to contact a few individuals whom he felt might be qualified candidates for the position. Cameron courted one person from Nashville that he felt could fulfill all the needs of the position of Department Chair. During this time chance struck again. A member of the community saw the job announcement in the newspaper and thought it sounded like something his brother would be interested in pursuing. He contacted his brother, Jeff Little, who was working in the entertainment industry in Nashville, and told him of the opening. Little had been living in Nashville for about 17 years and on the road for many of those years. He was originally from North Carolina and ready to settle down into a different kind of lifestyle. When Little heard of the opening, he applied and was hired.

When Cameron recounts the activities that led to hiring of Little, he says that “angels fell down from heaven” when Little entered the candidate pool (D. Cameron, personal communication, November 28, 2006). Kinard stated that GTCC “got undoubtedly gifted with the best candidate” when Little was hired as

the Department Chair (L. Kinard, personal communication, November 22, 2006). Little's extensive background positioned him as an excellent hire for the LGSET. Little's experience in the entertainment industry included employment as a producer, tour manager, bandleader, studio musician, sound engineer, and manager for national country artists John Michael Montgomery and Keith Urban. In addition to his work in the industry, Jeff is an accomplished blue grass piano performer who has been playing and performing from the age of six. He has toured internationally to countries such as France, Oman, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Tanzania, and Bahrain, sharing his talent and love of music.

The Grand Celebration

To officially dedicate the LGSET building GTCC held a four-day event sponsored by a local bank, Branch Banking and Trust Company, Inc. (BB&T) in late April 2004. BB&T underwrote the entire dedication event with a generous donation of \$40,000 (Kinard, 2007). Gatlin was the headline performer and played to a full crowd in the brand-new outdoor amphitheater. The event brought together musical and entertainment groups from six different area colleges and universities, and showcased performances from students of the LGSET, as well as the new Department Chair, Jeff Little.

Following Gatlin's performance, Cameron announced that GTCC had created the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology Hall of Fame in

dedication to those who have made significant contributions to the music industry. Gatlin was named as the first inductee. The second and third inductees to the Hall of Fame were honored posthumously. Former advisory committee members Kay Saintsing, Executive Director of the North Carolina Association of Festivals and Events, and Paul Franklin, Program Director of WTQR radio both had died tragically within recent months, and the college wanted to honor their contributions to the industry and to GTCC's entertainment technology program. The conclusion of the four-day celebration, with the announcement of the Hall of Fame as the finale, seemed to signify that the program had settled unto its own and had become the premier program that Cameron had hoped.

Fine Tuning

At the time of the dedication, the LGSET had been in operation for approximately three years and eight months and had grown in popularity among the students. Program enrollment had increased from 84 to 241. Extra course sections were added, and two additional full-time faculty members were hired to accommodate the increased enrollment.

Over the life of the program there had been several faculty changes. Near the end of 2003, Dupree had left to seek further opportunities within the industry at a local theater. Immediately following 9/11, Jackson left to manage her full-time responsibilities as a performer. Jackson had written a song, "Little Did She

Know She Kissed a Hero,” in response to the 9/11 tragedy and it was quickly picked up by radio stations across the country. The song was an instant hit, requiring Jackson to go on the road for television appearances, speaking engagements, and concerts. The program was experiencing the normal growth and turnover associated with a new program which required personnel changes.

Purely by chance, adjunct professor Richard Tremmel overheard discussions regarding the need for an additional full-time faculty member. Tremmel believed he had the background and expertise necessary to fulfill the full-time position and subsequently applied for the position. Tremmel’s credentials included work as a middle school and high school band instructor; an adjunct faculty member of music at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro; a manager of a major retail music establishment; and a professional musician, playing trumpet, guitar, and bass guitar in a number of bands performing throughout California, North Carolina, and Virginia. Tremmel’s skills and experience matched the needs of the program, and he was hired as the third full-time faculty member.

In fall 2004 semester, Kyle Welch, a spring 2002 Entertainment Technology graduate, was employed as the fourth full-time faculty member in the program. Welch had been teaching as an adjunct faculty member since spring 2003. Like the other full-time faculty members, he brought substantial industry experience into the classroom. Welch’s experience includes employment as a live sound engineer for clients such as Doc Watson, The North Carolina Democrat’s

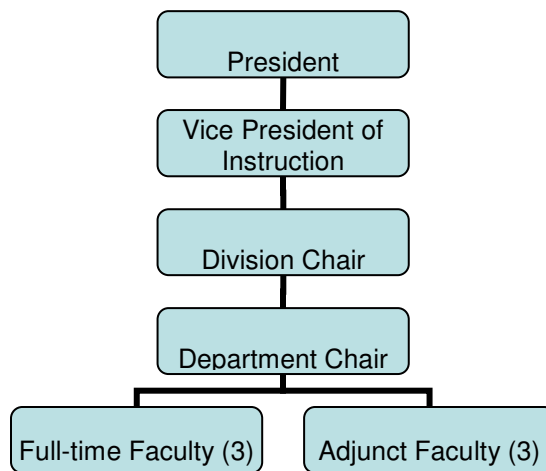
State Convention, The East Village Opera Co., The Machine, and Toyz; a local union member for the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts of the United States, Its Territories and Canada (IATSE-PAC) working on The Backstreet Boys tour and the Billy Joel/Elton John tour; a sound design/live sound engineer for local theater productions; a recording engineer for the Eastern Music Festival and regional bands including Steve Lynam, The Miles Blues Band and The Manhattan Project; a guitar player with the band Jaxon Jill; and a performer of classical and jazz guitar. Additionally, Welch is a Digidesign certified Pro Tools Operator, the most prevalent recording software used in the entertainment industry.

The college also hired three adjunct faculty members to teach lighting and introduction classes, fulfilling all of the current faculty needs. Two adjunct faculty members co-own a lighting and production company, and the third is employed at a compact disc (CD) manufacturing company and is a graduate of the LGSET.

The organizational structure of the program is consistent with all other programs at GTCC. (Table 2 delineates the organizational structure of the Entertainment Technology program.) The structure includes a Division Chair, who has administrative oversight over the program, and the Department Chair, who maintains the daily operations of the program, reviews and designs the curriculum, and supervises the faculty. In addition to administrative duties, the Department Chair also teaches and has co-op oversight. Full-time faculty members teach approximately 87.5% of the classes offered in the program. This

equates to an average teaching load of 20.5 hours per week. Adjunct faculty members are responsible for approximately 12.5% of the Entertainment Technology courses, resulting in an average teaching load of three hours per week.

Table 2: The Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology Organizational Structure



Street Credibility

A common slang term used by the Entertainment Technology faculty members is “street cred,” simply meaning that they have credibility with their students because of their current industry knowledge and experience. Chairman Little encourages program faculty to remain involved in their own personal interests within the entertainment industry and encourages gigging and

moonlighting in the field. As a result of their extracurricular industry activities, faculty members stay on top of the latest trends in technology, distribution methods, contracts, lighting, etc., within the industry. Faculty members report that they often have real-world scenarios to discuss with their students as a result of a gig from the night before. Because faculty members are out working in the industry, students gain a deeper level of respect for their teaching and expertise.

Curriculum Updates

To keep pace with changes in the industry, it is important for the Entertainment Technology curriculum to be evaluated and updated constantly. Little keeps the curriculum current primarily through two methods advisory committee and non-advisory committee input from industry representatives. All industry changes are taken under advisement, and the curriculum is altered as necessary.

Little spends a great deal of time soliciting input from his advisory committee members regarding shifts they see in the industry. Feedback from the advisory committee is imperative, as advisory committee members are involved directly in the intricacies of the industry and are excellent sources of current information.

Little invites industry representatives to speak to students about equipment that is being used within the industry. Interactions with guests allow students the

opportunity to ask technical questions about the equipment and its usage.

Additionally, it affords Little prospects for previewing the latest equipment being used in the field.

As a result of his past employment, Little maintains multiple relationships within the music industry. These associations not only allow him to have his hand on the pulse of the industry, but also identify prospects for future partnerships.

Partnerships through Co-ops

Students enrolled in all program options must complete a co-op as a requirement for graduation. Securing a co-op location is the primary responsibility of the student. However, faculty do assist by making recommendations for potential sites. Through various associations with local businesses and venues, faculty members have developed a number of co-op opportunities for students. Many of the co-ops are generated through relationships established with local advisory committee members.

Students completing co-ops receive periodic visits from Little during their employment. By design, he is the only faculty member to make co-op visits and personally meets with all co-op supervisors to ascertain areas where technical proficiencies may be lacking and ensure that students are meeting the expectations of the employer. Little is diligent about personally contacting appropriate individuals at all co-op locations to establish relationships that can be

utilized to generate future placement opportunities for both co-op students and graduates.

What Others Say About the Program

A total of 15 interviews were conducted with students, alumni, faculty, and advisory committee members. The interviews were designed to elicit facts and opinions regarding the LGSET from each interviewee. The following information was gleaned from discussions with individuals from the various categories that follow. Responses from interviewees have undergone minor editing to aid readability and ensure a concise response. To maintain confidentiality, names and any personally identifying information have been removed and replaced with a blank line to signify that a planned omission has been effected by the author.

Advisory Committee

Advisory committee members (see Appendix E) are selected based on their associations with the industry and direct contributions to the industry, both personal and professional. Opinions expressed by current and past advisory committee members demonstrate an excitement about the program curriculum and the potential impact graduates can make on the industry.

How did you get involved in the advisory committee?

“It just so happened that Larry Gatlin’s sound guy had worked for me for seven or eight years, and we had remained good friends. He contacted me to see if I would be interested in serving on the advisory committee. I was interested in serving and thought it was very exciting to have a program here in Greensboro. There are so few programs that really fill the need for providing people to the industry. I was pretty excited about the whole thing, and I am glad it got started.”

“Don Cameron contacted me about being involved with the program. At that point it was in its fruition stage. He brought me on board to design and teach some of the soft courses [such as songwriting] and asked me to be a liaison between performers and the college, hoping to bring in artists. We also had a couple of guest speakers one [of whom] was on Giant records at the time that she came to speak. I commute back and forth to Nashville, and he was interested in having someone who could contact people and have their finger on the market.”

THE PROGRAM

What are your general feelings about the program?

“I look back, especially at the students now, and think about how they can learn in six months what it took me six years to learn on my own. When I was 20 years old, there were not any schools for this; this was a fairly new industry. There were not a whole lot of people involved in it. You could have saved a lot of money and time to have had someone there to share their experience with you. I think about that with the whole program—we can keep people from wasting their time by leading them right to where they want to be.”

“[The program has] grown exponentially and has become something that we are all very grateful for and very proud of.”

“What excites me most about this program [is] it is a fraction of the cost, compared to so many of the other schools. There are only a couple of schools that come to mind that prepare you for the industry, and they are very expensive. I have hires that came straight from those schools to work for me, and I immediately had to start training them because they were not prepared to work. I feel like GTCC is really producing the best group of students. GTCC is really getting students ready to go right into the workplace better than any other school that I know. Everything I do, other advisory committee members do, or

instructors do, makes a big difference in how prepared the students are to go into the work place. I feel really good about that because I do not think people should have to spend a fortune to work. This may be specialty work, but it is just work like any other industry out there, but it is a lot more fun than most.”

“This program is crazy affordable!”

“If these kids want to be the next Garth Brooks, or the next Shania Twain, or the next Brittany Spears, they need to get signed with a major record label. If you want to make a living making music you can do that. If you want to pay your bills and do what you have a passion to do, you can do that. You have house concerts for venues and the internet for distribution; there are a number of ways to earn an income and pay your bills through what you love to do.”

“This program is amazing! It is absolutely state-of-the-art. It is an awesome facility. I hope students realize how incredibly fortunate they are to have that type of facility right here!”

“It is very cool to be a part of something that innovative. I can help these kids out, and I can help cut some corners. I can keep them from wasting some serious time, or signing away their song catalog. It is very exciting to know I can help these kids, I can make a difference. Short cuts and tricks of the trade are the

kinds of things that are invaluable [sic]. I could help these kids cut some corners so they don't have to go the scenic route like I did."

"Students must always remember show business is two words. You have to take care of the business side of the industry and not just concentrate on the music."

"The technical aspects of the program are its greatest strength. As much as I respect the fact that there is a performer concentration, you either have that or you do not. You can not teach someone to have the "it" factor. We can teach someone how to craft a song, but if you are a songwriter, that is a gift. And there is a difference. But, if the college's goal is to put kids in a position where they can get employed, all of the technical and engineering courses are the program's biggest asset by far."

CO-OPS

What are your feelings about the co-op requirements?

"It is about real world experience! There are a lot of programs out there that seem to be taught by the book, but when they get out there, students do not know what to do. They never put their knowledge to work in context with the way things really are on the job. So the internships (co-ops) are the things that get

them out on the job working to see what they need to know. Sometimes when you are reading a book you hit the high spots and think, ‘Oh, I have got to know this!’ this is the most important thing I need to learn. Then when you get out there you realize that this is really the least important thing for you to really know. So many other skills may be more important on the job. Your priorities can never really be set until you are actually doing the work on the job.

Having people who have the [industry] experience like Jeff and TJ—these guys have been in the industry a long time—helps them put emphasis on the priorities to start with and make people realize what is important. Skills that are not in the book are the most important. Jeff and I probably do not have a meeting where we do not talk about dependability. For all of our jobs, dependability is the number one factor. You have got to impress upon people that if they want to keep a job, no matter how much they know, dependability is still the most important thing. If I can count on employees, I can teach them anything that they need to know, as opposed to those who may have so many skills and so much talent, but they are not dependable. If you cannot count on them, you want them to go somewhere else. It is good to have a quality instruction and also get people out there doing hands-on work.”

How have the interns, you have employed, fared?

“Our very first intern that we got was great. It was amazing to see how interested my employees became in teaching and sharing the information that they had with the intern. You could see that my employees took great pride in what they knew and the skills that they possessed. I was very pleased to see employees take the time to explain things to the interns. It was almost as if everyone had a sense of pride in what they could share and in the whole educational experience and personal progression of someone. The employees thought that if an intern left here and had learned something, that they had their own little personal accomplishment in helping to guide and direct them. It was a good thing to see that happen.”

What contributions have you made to the advisory committee?

“Jeff and I talk a lot, and it is always an idea producing conversation. We talk about things that will be great for students in different areas. We even talk about employment possibilities for the students. I have called a lot of people that I know in the industry that could be potential employers. I think what we need to be able to do is place these students in employment. The whole purpose of GTCC is to train people, give them the skills to be able to place them in the work place. That is just the bottom line whether it is entertainment or as a diesel mechanic; GTCC wants graduates to have a job. As a company owner I know how important

it is to have a pool of qualified people to find the one that is right for us. There have been quite a few graduates that have taken jobs with other advisory committee members.”

“I found out that the program needed another [sound recording] board for their classes. The program needed something where the same instructor can be looking at things going on at two different boards. I thought about a board I have, it is a good board and in great working condition, but like other things in the industry, it is not new. It is not the most requested board out there, but it is a perfect board for students to learn on. I knew it would do whole lot more good out there in the hands of students than it would sitting in my warehouse in a case, so I donated it to the program.”

SUMMARY

Many advisory committee members have hired program graduates for both permanent positions and co-ops. Through their association with the program, committee members can see the benefit for all involved parties and are eager to foster relationships that will ultimately benefit their organization, the student, the college, and the entertainment industry.

The program is fortunate to have a wide variety of individuals committed to providing input and advice to the LGSET regularly. Without such individuals

the program would not remain on the leading edge and, therefore, would lack its ability to prepare students effectively.

Students

THE DECISION TO ENROLL

Responses from interviews with students indicate that a variety of reasons exist for decisions to enroll in the Entertainment Technology program. However, the overarching theme is that most students are musicians in their own right (many play musical instruments such as the electric bass, classical guitar, mandolin, banjo, and several are singers) or have a desire to work in the entertainment industry in another capacity. Most are or were in a band or have performed in public either alone or with a group. None reported that they entered the program without a prior interest in the industry.

Why did you decide to enroll in the program?

“I have been doing sound at churches and other events for probably close to ten years now and have always had a love for it. I actually work for a company now called _____ and I’ve always enjoyed it. It just intrigued me to be able to make somebody sound good and to figure out how the radio songs work. Music is so entwined with everything else. It is so much work to make them [musicians]

sound good, but to be able to have that knowledge and the ability to do that is just empowering. I like it. It is a drive that keeps going on and doing it.”

“I was planning on going to the Belmont school in Nashville, TN, which is considered to be a really good school; a lot of country music people have gone to school there. However, I definitely couldn’t afford it because it is a private school. So I found this [LGSET] after I decided I was not going to TN. I looked on the internet and found information about this program and enrolled here.”

“I am a musician; I play the guitar. I really have always wanted to be in a band, to be a recording star, go on tour, and be famous. But because I live in North Carolina, it is kind of hard to do all of that. There is a program here, and I can go out and become a recording engineering. Even if I am not in a huge, famous band, I can at least learn how to make my own records at home. I can have my own studio and record for other people as well. That is what really inspired me to come here.”

“I was previously a musician before I started the program. The program has opened up a lot of doors for me by learning more aspects of what I want to make a career out of. I am learning the behind the scenes things. It [the LGSET] will just help out in the long run.”

“I actually have a couple of different interests in the program. Live sound is a big one because I am a performer as well as a songwriter. However, I am more interested in the management side. I am also a performer so there are so many different areas that I could look at that would help enhance my career. It makes it a lot easier speak to and be understood by the sound engineers if you know how to speak to them in a way that they understand; so that was one of the major reasons for enrolling. I own my own publishing company, so I am now able to forward my career with my publishing. Now I can make sure that I am handling everything correctly.”

“My brother was a student in the program and he told me about the classes. It was appealing to me because I was a music student at _____ and was frustrated with the program. I wanted something different. My other program was very traditional, and I was a bit burned out on that—although it was good for me, it was very disciplined and made me a better musician. I have always been attracted to a program that had knobs and buttons and lights. I had actually looked at another school similar to this before I went to _____ but could not find a four year university that had a music program that I liked, or that I could afford. So when this came up I was anxious to get into it.”

“I thought it would be a good idea. I have been playing music since I was 14 years old and have always liked music. I have just never had any interest in

doing anything else. I had actually applied, and was about to go to _____, to learn to work on cars for a living, and then I just decided that was not what I wanted to do. I was good at playing guitar, and I thought I would like to make a career out of it.”

FUTURE GOALS

It is common for students to not have a clear sense of what they want to do with their lives. Typically students enroll in classes to explore their options, see what opportunities are available upon graduation, and discover their strengths and interests. The interviewed students all had a strong sense that their future goals included work within the music industry. Many have realized that even though their first love may be becoming a professional musician, they know the realities that make this a difficult goal to attain.

What are your future goals?

“I am really stuck between two goals. I either want to open up my own sound installation business or run live sound in either Branson, MO, or Myrtle Beach, NC, or a place that has a lot of theaters. I would like to get job working at a [live music] theater like the Alabama Theater or the Gatlin Brothers Theater.”

“My goals change every day. When I started coming to school, I started taking classes for sound recording. Then I decided I liked doing live sound better. The program requires students to take a lighting class, and I didn’t think I would like that, but I did. So now I thought maybe I could do lighting design. I think now my main goal is to be kind of what I am now, which is a production manager, but at a bigger level. I want to be involved in all different processes and still be involved in a show that is being put together with sound and lighting.”

“I am working toward becoming a songwriter and performance is secondary.”

“Honestly, my goals have changed since I have been in the program. I look at things differently. At first, it was all about how to manage my career, but now my main objective is to figure out how I can help other people in my music genre to further their careers. There are a lot of talented kids out there that really need someone to help them that is honest and someone that has their best interest at heart. You can really, really be taken for a ride in this business if you don’t know what you’re doing. I would like to head that off for some of these kids that are really very, very talented and deserve somebody who they can trust to represent them.”

“I am a musician and I am learning to play a couple of instruments, the bass guitar and the piano. I used to played saxophone when I was in middle school, so I play that also. I am currently doing some computer arranging and editing, so as an artist I do all of that. When I graduate I would like to try this for about two years to see if I can make it. First and foremost, I would like to get a job in engineering. It has a greater appeal to me than producing because I would rather do mixes than make the music. I just want to focus on getting a solid job that I can do 5 days a week, 10-12 hours a day, and make a decent living.”

“I want to make a living doing what I like, playing session guitar, that is why I came here. I do not really have any aspiration to be a touring musician. When I came here I was hoping to figure out how to become a session guitar player because that is what is comfortable for me. I want to play [the guitar] all the time and not really have to be on the road.”

PROGRAM MARKETING

The LGSET does very little marketing outside of occasional fliers and college fairs at local high schools. Students enrolled in the program typically discovered the program through word-of-mouth or on the Internet.

How did you hear about this program?

“Word of mouth from someone I work with. My boss at _____ (a company within the industry) told me that there were really two major schools that were good for live sound. One was a school in Florida and the other was GTCC. Since I was born and raised in High Point, and I did not really want to move to Florida by myself, I thought I would give this [the LGSET] a try. It has turned out to be a really good opportunity.”

“After I graduated from high school I decided to take a semester off. I was going to go to _____ to do acoustic guitar, but knew you do not make any money doing that. Then GTCC notebook [catalog] came in the mail one day. I just had to do something, so I looked through it and saw recording engineering and I thought, ‘I can do that!’”.

“One of my friends from high school actually enrolled in the program the year before I graduated. He was telling me all about the program, knowing I was a musician, and told me I should come check it out. I came with him to school one day, before I even graduated from high school, and fell in love with the program. The instructors were so knowledgeable and I felt like I could learn here.”

“I actually heard about this program from my dad who is a radio DJ. One of his coworkers works at Guilford Tech [GTCC] and brought in a pamphlet for my dad to give to me. It was perfect; it was everything I had been looking for. It was something that really piqued my interest.”

“After I got out of high school, I applied to other colleges. I tried to find a college that pertained to the technology field. I checked out and applied to a bunch of other colleges, but other colleges I checked out didn’t have a program like this. Other colleges focused in on film rather than the music aspect of engineering. My mom had read about the program in the paper and told me about it and she told me to check out. I came over and, even though all the doors were locked, I just looked in and could see that we were on the right track. Once I was admitted I was pretty much set to go.”

“A friend of mine saw a story they ran on a local news channel a few years ago, when the building first opened up. My friend said, ‘you know, you should check that place out’. I really did not think much of it until one day I typed GTCC in my computer and found out about the program.”

PROGRAM SUCCESSES

Students need a sense of accomplishment and content mastery to feel as though their investment has been worthwhile. When students report that they have had positive experiences in the course of their studies, it demonstrates a strong sense of academic satisfaction.

What would you say is the best experience that you have had in this program?

“All of it so far. I have not missed one day of class. I love coming here. I love the environment here. Everyone is laid back but focused on learning what needs to be learned. I really like everything here.”

“All of the classes have taught me more of the business aspects rather than the technical aspects. I have learned a lot more about person-to-person contact with others, such as the sound guy, not just with the musical entertainer.”

“The lighting class has been my best experience. You can only hang lights in the practice rooms so many times until you say, “Okay, I get it now.” My faculty member had us go out and actually work for two weeks at a church. We helped hang light fixtures in the worship center and other areas. Having that practical experience of going out and actually doing work in a real life situation

has probably been the best thing. Another thing we did was set up for a concert in the amphitheater.”

“The live sound classes and the live performance class have helped me a lot—learning what makes what I do [as a musician] work. Before this program I knew how to turn a microphone on and that was about the extent of my technical knowledge. Now I feel pretty comfortable with the whole sound system.”

“It is pretty much a thrill to meet other people that are doing exactly what I am doing and trying to get through it. We are all trying to progress to do something greater, by starting here first. I have learned so much more from the teachers because they are inspired by us just being there.”

“There were several, one of the best experiences I had was when I was taking Recording II or III, they brought in a band from the outside and we spent the whole semester recording an album for that band. It was one of the best experiences. We were immersed in it and having an internship in a studio. We built a studio from the ground up. It was great!”

“About a month and a half ago I played in a concert with Jeff [Little] here and that was a big deal for me. The people Jeff got to come and play were top notch. It got me in front of a crowd. Not being in a band I don’t get in front of a

crowd very much. That was a pretty good time because Jeff is an amazing piano player, and it was first for me to be able to play with really talented people. Also, in my second semester here, Doc Watson came to put on a concert and even though I was not in any of the classes that were setting up for the concert, I got to come and hang out and watch the set-up. I thought that was pretty cool.”

SUMMARY

Student retention, the percentage of students who attend one term and return for the following term, depends on a number of factors. However, Napoli and Wortman (1998) suggest that one of the primary factors related to student retention is the social interaction in both academic and extracurricular settings. The LGSET has experienced excellent retention rates—suggesting high student satisfaction. Table 3 is an overview of the program retention rates for the past two academic years.

Table 3: Program Retention Rates

Year	Retention Rate by Percentage
Fall 2004	84%
Spring 2005	83%
Fall 2005	87%
Spring 2006	86%

Interviews with students indicated that they were overwhelmingly happy with their introduction and immersion in the Entertainment Technology field. Students feel as though they learned valuable information and gained tools for their future employment. Positive interactions with faculty and a high level of respect for faculty experience in and knowledge of the field attributes to classroom satisfaction.

Students stated that their experiences in the program had been overwhelmingly positive. Many reported that their best experiences in the program had been the opportunity to combine practical application in realistic settings with in-class discussions. This suggests that students are finding a balance between a traditional classroom environment and extracurricular opportunities.

Alumni

Alumni interviewed stated that their experiences with the program were positive. It was sometimes difficult for alumni to make comments about the program because so much time had passed since their graduation. Alumni realize that the program has evolved and changed.

PROGRAM BENEFITS

What do you consider to be some of the benefits of the program?

“During my first year in the program, other students were completing a capstone project and they had a concert going on. They did not have anyone in the program yet that was graduating that could run the sound board so they asked me to do it. Being able to run the sound board for that concert was probably one of my favorite experiences I have had the whole time. I hadn’t even made it past all of my live sound classes yet, but I was able to do that. Just being able to run the sound for that concert taught me a lot about what I was doing. Doing it actually hands on allows you to learn a lot more than just sitting in the classroom.”

“The program prepared me for a lot of the knowledge that I needed. The hands-on helped to prepare me by being behind consoles and understanding all the basics. I think this is one of the industries where you learn a lot more after you get out in it because it is such a hands on industry. It is one of those industries where you will never finish learning, everything is changing so fast. There are a lot of technologies out there that we have not used; you never quit learning. You really cannot learn it all. The biggest thing is that I got my foot in the door here.”

“Being able to put the degree on a résumé.” (Referring to the fact that not many in the industry hold degrees in their area of expertise.)

“The program prepares you for an entry level position, then along with the knowledge that you have gained from the program along with hands on experience, that is how students really learn.”

“Being able to record some of my own stuff in a professional facility and learn from it.”

“More than anything, it gives you the credentials to enter the industry. How you apply that, what you have learned, is really up to you and how much effort you want to put into it.”

THE DECISION TO ENROLL

Why did you decide to enroll in the program?

“To be able to get a degree locally in the field that I was interested in, without having to go out of state or give up what I was already doing [working in the industry as a sound editor].”

“I was enrolled at another school and just was not happy with what I was studying. My mom told me about this program and I have played music all my life, played guitar, played in bands. It was something I was always a part of, and it would keep my interest and it would make me happy. I knew I wouldn’t make a

great deal of money in life but that wasn't important to me. I wanted to do something I want to do."

SUMMARY

Graduates of the program have received employment in many facets of the entertainment industry, such as: television studio engineer, church audio equipment installation, sound and lighting production, and sound recording software manufacturing. Program graduates make statements similar to current students with respect to the quality of the faculty and the opportunity for hands-on experiences. They also emphasized that to be successful in the entertainment industry, individuals must be open to learning new things continually, the program cannot teach everything; it merely helps students get a foot in the door.

Continuous program evaluation can increase rigor and disclose subject areas that may need strengthening. Chairman Little seeks informal feedback from students, alumni, and advisory committee members.

Demography

The following tables were compiled from secondary data obtained from the Office of Institutional Research at Guilford Technical Community College.

Enrollment

Table 4: Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology Headcount Enrollment

Year	Full-Time	%	Part-Time	%	Total (Unduplicated)	% Change Year to Year
2000-2001	30	36	54	64	84	
2001-2002	68	52	64	48	132	57
2002-2003	56	24	178	76	234	77
2003-2004	56	23	185	77	241	3
2004-2005	71	27	194	63	265	10
2005-2006	163	62	99	38	262	(1)
Fall 2006	146	74	51	26	197	
Total (Duplicated)	590	42	825	58	1415	

Note: GTCC migrated to a new management information system during 2001. Total implementation was completed in the fall of 2002. During that time period there were unusual data fluctuations. This applies to all tables within this section.

Prior to 2005-2006, full-time/part-time figures did not include developmental courses because the credits for those courses did not apply toward student graduation. However, beginning in 2005-2006, the reporting policy was changed to include developmental credits. Developmental courses still do not count toward graduation.

Fall 2006 represents only one semester. All other figures represent a full academic year.

By the end of the 2005-2006 academic year, the program had experienced enrollment increases of more than three times the initial enrollment. Table 4 categorizes total enrollment by part-time and full-time status. Chairman Little

projects that the program will continue to increase by approximately 10% over the next five years. Overall program enrollment has increased 212% from fall 2000 to the end of spring 2006.

Age of Students

Table 5: Enrollment by Age

Year	<18-24	%	25-34	%	35-44	%	45+	%	Total
2000-2001	64	76	18	22	1	1	1	1	84
2001-2002	98	74	27	20	5	4	2	2	132
2002-2003	172	74	47	20	10	4	5	2	234
2003-2004	183	76	44	18	10	4	4	2	241
2004-2005	204	77	44	17	13	5	4	1	265
2005-2006	183	70	64	24	12	5	3	1	262
Total (Duplicated)	908	75	246	20	51	4	19	1	1218

Year	<18	%	18-20	%	21-22	%	23-24	%	25-30	%
Fall 2006	4	2	81	41	37	19	15	8	41	21

Year	31-35	%	36-40	%	41-50	%	Over 50	%	Total
Fall 2006	11	6	1	1	6	1	1	1	197

Note: Beginning in fall 2006 ages were reported in more specific categories.

Cameron often states that he believes that the attraction of this program to students lies in the fact that music is universal; everyone is drawn to a music genre. The program appeals to students from a wide range of age groups and backgrounds. However, the predominant age range over the life of the program has been within the 18 – 24-year-old group. A review of the fall 2006 enrollment figures pinpoints the age range of 18 – 20 as being the most commonly represented. Table 5 groups students by various age categories.

Gender

Table 6: Enrollment by Gender

Year	Male	%	Female	%
2000-2001	69	82	15	18
2001-2002	104	78	28	22
2002-2003	195	83	39	17
2003-2004	214	89	27	11
2004-2005	233	88	32	12
2005-2006	229	87	33	13
Fall 2006	165	84	32	16
Total (Duplicated)	1209	85	206	15

Student enrollment statistics reflect the gender bias seen in the entertainment industry. Males dominant the industry from technical aspects,

manual labor, and performance perspectives. Table 6 separates total enrollment by gender and shows percentages of male versus female students enrolled in the program.

Ethnicity

Table 7: Enrollment by Ethnicity

Year	White	%	Black	%	Other	%	Total
2000-2001	61	73	21	22	2	2	84
2001-2002	88	67	39	30	5	4	132
2002-2003	147	63	76	32	11	5	234
2003-2004	153	63	80	33	8	3	241
2004-2005	151	57	104	39	10	4	265
2005-2006	155	59	97	37	10	4	262

Year	American Indian/ Alaska Native	%	Asian or Pacific Islander	%	Black, Non-Hispanic	%	Total
Fall 2006	1	.5	1	.5	62	31	197

Year	White, Non-Hispanic	%	Other/Unknown/Multiple	%	Total
Fall 2006	128	65	4	2	197

Note: Beginning in fall 2006 ages were reported in more specific categories.

Demographics indicate that minority enrollment in the LGSET is slightly lower than the total GTCC population which has a 41% minority student population (Guilford Technical Community College, 2007). Fall 2006 statistics report that minority students, most Black/Non-Hispanic, comprise approximately 33% of the Entertainment Technology program enrollment. Table 7 separates ethnicity by category and provides percentages in each category.

Student Travel Distance to Campus

Table 8: Fall 2006 Student Travel Distance to Campus for Currently Enrolled Students

Distance from Campus	Number of Students	% of Total
< 10 miles	41	21
11 – 20 miles	73	37
21 – 30 miles	39	20
31 – 40 miles	13	6
41 – 50 miles	2	1
51 – 60 miles	7	4
> 60 miles	22	11

Quite often decisions to enroll in a particular community college are made based on proximity of the college to the student's home. Interestingly enough, an informal poll compiled by the faculty of the LGSET revealed that approximately 15% of students enrolled in the Entertainment Technology program had moved to the area from a distance greater than 100 miles. However, secondary data from the institution in Table 8 provide calculations from fall 2006, indicating that 15% of students traveled more than 50 miles to campus.

Enrollment by Program Option

Table 9: Number of Students Enrolled in Each Option

Program Option	Number of Students	Percentage of Students Enrolled
Entertainment Technology	4	2%
Entertainment Technology/ Recording Engineering	140	71%
Entertainment Technology/ Concert Sound & Lighting	22	11%
Entertainment Technology/ Music Performance	13	7%
Entertainment Technology/ Artist/Music Management	18	9%

Four distinct program options are available to students. Students unsure of which option to choose upon entering the program, may choose a general

classification of “Entertainment Technology.” This designation assigns the student to the program for the purpose of calculating budgets for the department, yet provides them an opportunity to declare their specific interests at a future date. Of the four program options, 71% of students were enrolled in the recording engineering option, clearly showing this is the area of most interest for students. Table 9 separates total program enrollment by program option.

Graduation Rates

Table 10: Graduation Rates

Year	Number of Graduates	Yearly Enrollment	% of Yearly Total Enrollment
2001-2002	11	132	8
2002-2003	12	234	5
2003-2004	14	241	6
2004-2005	8	265	3
2005-2006	15	262	6
Total	60	1134	5

Since program inception, a total of 60 students have graduated. Despite continually increasing enrollment, graduation rates over the life of the program

have remained relatively constant. Table 10 offers an overview of the graduation rates over the life of the program.

Conclusion

President Cameron's perseverance and contacts allowed him to create his own fortune. Through delegation to the right individuals with appropriate levels of expertise, it was inevitable that the new program would draw students. Cameron's ability to see beyond the obvious and imagine possibilities continually was an asset. He entertained grandiose ideas of constructing a new state-of-the-art building and convinced others to embrace the idea as well. This forward-thinking attitude worked to Cameron's advantage when faced with changing personnel issues. The personnel changes offered the opportunity to take the program to a higher level through the employment of more experienced individuals.

From all indications the LGSET rapidly has become a program of distinction. Increasing student enrollment and positive feedback from students, alumni, and advisory committee members indicates that the program is meeting the needs of the students. Backing from ardent advisory committee members, coupled with enthusiastic support from the community and industry representatives, implies that the program is meeting the needs of both the local community and the entertainment industry.

The culmination of leadership, delegation, imagination, talent, determination, and persistence has resulted in a program with an increasing

enrollment—the majority of these students would most likely not be enrolled in college were it not for the LGSET.

CHAPTER FIVE

IMPLICATIONS

Theoretical Leadership and Practitioner Applications

Leadership is the backbone of the formation and success of any partnership. Without strong leadership such endeavors would surely fail. If leadership is the essential component of successful alliances, one must understand what makes a good leader.

Leadership theory has been studied for many years, and many definitions have been offered as a result. There are many well-respected leadership authorities who provide explanations for what they believe makes a notable leader. Three such authorities are James MacGregor Burns, Warren Bennis, and John W. Gardner.

JAMES MACGREGOR BURNS

Burns (1978) believes that leadership hinges on the ability to find purpose. He defines leadership as “leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivations—the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations—*of both leaders and followers*” (p. 9). Leadership is founded on

relationships where the leader appeals to the “motive bases of potential followers” (Burns, 1978, p. 18).

Characteristics of a transformational leader previously defined in Chapter Two describe a leader as being adept at conveying vision and strategic initiatives to the organization while inspiring and marshalling the support of followers (Hanson, 2003; Roueche, Baker, & Rose, 1989). Transformational leadership as delineated by Burns (1978) has three primary components:

1. Intellectual leadership – A leader who is “concerned critically with values, purposes, ends that transcend immediate practical needs” (p. 141).
2. Reform leadership – A leader centered in moralistic actions that can easily bring forth partners and supporters willing to make significant organizational change.
3. Revolutionary leadership – A leader devoted to the birth and execution of an idea, who is willing to commit total energy and effort to see it through.

WARREN BENNIS

Bennis (1997) asserts that a leader’s primary focus is to “conquer the context—the volatile, turbulent, ambiguous surroundings that sometimes seem to conspire against us and will surely suffocate us if we let them” (p. 63). Leaders

provide vision for the organization and work to motivate and inspire others during the change process (Bennis, 1997).

Bennis' theory of leadership is in direct agreement with other transformational leadership proponents (Burns, 1978; Hanson, 2003; Roueche, Baker, & Rose, 1989). Bennis believes that it is imperative for a leader to elicit change through the use of purpose, trust, and optimism in order to transform the organization. Purpose is found in the strategic plan and in the determination to meet the goals at hand. Parallel to one another are the elements of trust and optimism. Leaders and followers alike must have a clear sense of trust in the other and must both move forward with optimism and pride.

Evidence of Transformational Leadership

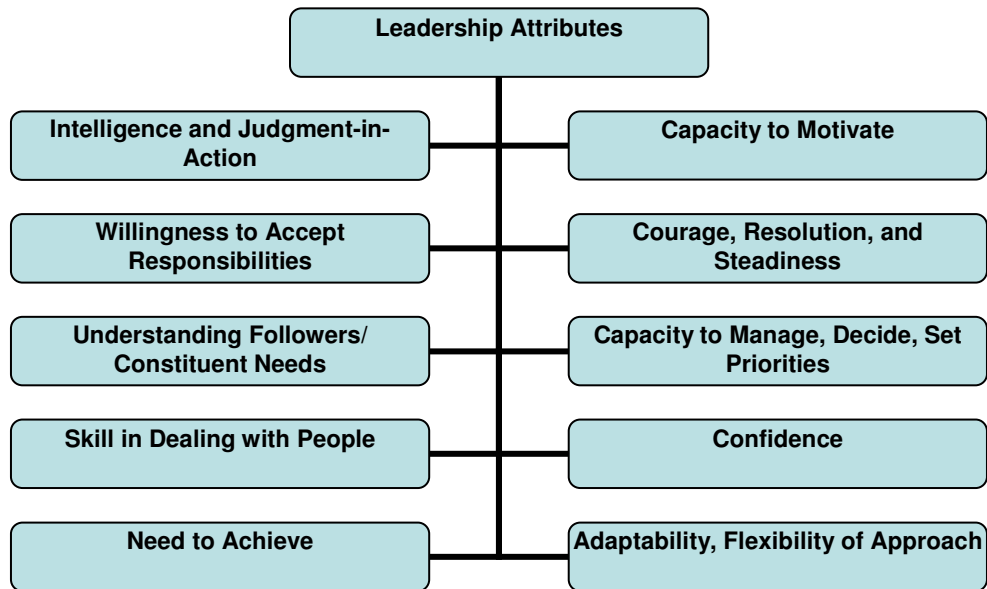
Throughout the development of the LGSET, Cameron demonstrated many of the traits and characteristics outlined throughout the leadership literature (Bennis, 1997; Burns, 1978; Roueche, Baker, & Rose, 1989; Wharton, 1997). Cameron demonstrated transformational leadership traits through his desire to hold true to his vision of a program dedicated to teaching some aspect of music. The vision Cameron had was quite revolutionary, as the LGSET is the first program of its kind in the state of North Carolina. Cameron had the determination to see his dream come true. He patiently waited and held to his ideals, and when circumstances were right, he pushed his dream through to reality.

Additionally, Cameron demonstrated intellectual leadership by predicting future student and community needs. Cameron believed that an Entertainment Technology program would be worthwhile and valuable for the community. Though there had not been any previous indication that this type of program was needed in the area, responses to surveys and inquiries regarding the program were overwhelmingly positive. The opportunity was lying dormant and just needed to be actualized. Cameron was willing to take a risk on a program that he believed would start out small with the hope that it would grow significantly over time.

JOHN W. GARDNER

To fulfill the roles and tasks of an effective leader successfully, one must possess some basic attributes. Gardner (1990) suggests that not all leaders possess the same attributes, and such traits are not present in every situation (p. 48). (Table 11 gives a pictorial account of some of the attributes that Gardner (1990) feels are significant for leaders (pp. 48-53).)

Table 11: Gardner’s List of Leader Attributes



Attributes in Action

Attributes outlined by Gardner were demonstrated in the following ways by Cameron throughout the process of establishing of the LGSET:

Intelligence and Judgment-in-Action – Gardner (1990) defines this as a leader who is able to move from analysis to action through the use of intuition and data (p. 49). Fueled by the belief that music was universal, Cameron followed his instincts and pursued his vision.

Willingness (Eagerness) to Accept Responsibilities – It was imperative that Cameron take responsibility for the success or failure of the idea of the LGSET as he is accountable to the Board of Trustees, students, faculty, and staff. Leaders unable to accept responsibilities lose the backing of constituents, and morale suffers.

Understanding of Followers/Constituents and Their Needs – While negotiating with Gatlin, it was necessary for Cameron to understand the needs of the potential partner. Both parties had to come to mutually agreeable terms for the partnership to work. Cameron also needed to understand the needs of the students and the community. Through surveys, research, and discussions with individuals in the industry, the picture outlining the needs of such a program became clearer.

Skill in Dealing with People – Without the ability to negotiate, inquire, and interact with others of various backgrounds, it would have been impossible for Cameron to develop the relationships that were created during the process of investigating and implementing the LGSET. Relationships enabled a successful program.

Need to Achieve – Individuals have their own personal goals and reasons for wanting to obtain those goals. Leaders are no different. Cameron was driven by an intrinsic need to see this program completed.

Capacity to Motivate – One cannot build a program alone; it takes the work of many to build reputable and worthwhile programming. Cameron was able to motivate followers through his deep desire to see his vision a reality.

Courage, Resolution, Steadiness – Cameron had the courage to present an idea that many saw as a “pipe dream,” the wherewithal to never give up on his dream, and the steadfastness to never let the idea die.

Capacity to Manage, Decide, Set Priorities – Cameron managed the other priorities of the college while still devoting funds and staffing to building the LGSET. After the program was under way, Cameron’s priority became to acquire funding that would support the construction of a new building to house the Entertainment Technology program. Cameron had his sights set on making the LGSET a premier program at GTCC.

Confidence – The ability to set priorities and make decisions is strengthened when a leader exudes confidence. Without confidence in their leader, followers would quickly doubt their role in the development or support of the vision. Cameron exuded confidence throughout every step of the process; he believed in what the college was about to undertake.

Adaptability and Flexibility of Approach – When approaching others to form a partnership, it is imperative that both parties find a common ground upon which the foundation is set. Cameron had a simple dream—one that was not fully developed. When Cameron approached Gatlin with his proposal, Gatlin viewed the idea from a broader perspective. Since Cameron was adaptable and flexible, and respected Gatlin’s suggestions, the plan began to grow in new directions. Without Cameron’s willingness to accept changes and suggestions, the program would not have been initiated.

Entrepreneurs and Visionaries

Community college leaders entering into partnerships must possess entrepreneurial and transformational traits to accomplish the mutual goals of the partnership effectively (Roueche, Baker, & Rose, 1989). Cameron clearly exuded many of the attributes that Glass and Jackson (1998b) define as transformational leadership skills—“change-oriented, able to articulate their vision, and the ability to determine direction as they evaluate the needs their constituencies” (para 16). An amalgamation of definitions from the literature suggests that an entrepreneur can be defined as one who seeks ways to be innovative, capitalizes on opportunities, engages in intelligent risk taking, effortlessly marshals support from followers, empowers others, and mobilizes others in support of new ideas

(Buettner, Morrison, & Wasicek, 2002; Roueche, Baker, & Rose, 1989; Ryan & Palmer, 2005).

Cameron demonstrated all of these entrepreneurial traits, along with great fortitude, while waiting until the opportunity for discussion with the appropriate individual was present. Cameron was opportunistic, pushed through his previous self-doubt of unrefined ideas, and presented them in raw form to Gatlin.

As meetings and discussions with Gatlin ensued, there were indications that if Cameron's ideas for his School of Country Music had been defined more clearly, Gatlin's influence may have been restricted to more of a minor role. As it was, Gatlin was extremely influential in the definition of the Entertainment Technology school origins and the program as it currently exists. Gatlin's 30-plus years of experience in the entertainment industry, combined with his business savvy and entrepreneurial expertise, were just the catalysts that Cameron needed to give the program depth and substance. It was abundantly obvious that by following his instincts, Cameron had sought out the right individual.

Intelligent Risk-Taking

Entrepreneurialism requires "opportunism, innovation, and risk-taking" (Glass & Jackson, 1998b, para. 19)—the ability to take risks is imperative in order to initiate or further partnerships. Within a partnership there always exists the possibility that one partner may not uphold previously made promises. Risks are

inevitable in partnerships. Cameron unmistakably took a risk in asking Gatlin to allow the college to use his name; yet, because Gatlin could see the potential impact of the program, and was personally humbled by the gesture, he quickly agreed.

Fisher's, *Power of the Presidency* (1984), posits that many feel that leaders must take risks on a regular basis or be viewed as not being worthy of the position granted them (p. 17). Yet, leaders cannot wildly take risks; they must take calculated risks. These well-thought-out actions are referred to as intelligent risk-taking.

Intelligent risk-taking is apparent throughout all phases of program development. Schneider has gone on record as saying that she believed the idea for the program was “the dumbest idea” she had ever heard (C. Schneider, personal communication, November 14, 2006). Yet, because she had been selected to lead the program development committee, she knew she had only one objective: to make the program feasible. Schneider's primary responsibility was to uphold the expectations of the President by providing her utmost support. Once Schneider visited SPC and saw firsthand the potential for such a program, she was inspired to endorse the idea wholeheartedly.

A retrospective look at the origin of the program and processes involved in its creation gave Schneider further insights as to her original hesitations. She stated:

One reason I felt particularly challenged by the NCCCS program approval process was the traditional role of program development—that role was to create programs in response to community economic needs. Clearly, there was no big demand in Guilford County for trained entertainment technicians and performers. We did have to figure out a way to justify the program in spite of the traditional ‘response mode’ that was/is the system's program approval process. However, I think this approach is really sort of pioneering, in the sense that programs in the future well might be developed as economic drivers, not economic responses. . . . This seems to be shifting a bit, but certainly program development is now both responsive and ‘incentive.’ (C. Schneider, personal communication, November 14, 2006).

The mission of the community college has been defined as the ability to provide educational opportunities for all, while serving the needs of the community (Gleazer, 1980; Roueche, 1968; Roueche, Ely, & Roueche, 2001; Vaughan, 2006). The founding of the LGSET was not in response to any external indication that a need existed for individuals trained in the music industry. The program simply germinated from an idea. However, the NCCCS approval process required that the program be justified by a need. Greensboro and the surrounding area are not considered hotspots for the entertainment industry. But, upon surveying local businesses and organizations that might potentially benefit from

hiring graduates of such a program, the development team discovered that a number of such beneficiaries existed.

This is a clear indication that while it is understandable that a need should exist before a program is created it is also true that possible needs might exist on a small scale yet to be discovered. The greater lesson learned is that as a leader it is necessary to strike out on one's own, from time to time blazing new trails.

Rationale for establishing programs and partnerships may not be immediately evident, but they may entice and attract individuals, businesses, and community support.

A leader has to be prepared to be a risk-taker—one who is forward-thinking, ground-breaking, and non-traditional. Being on the leading edge of progress has benefits. Colleges should not be hampered by the tried-and-true methods of program development. GTCC has taken a risk that has paid off exponentially for the college.

Partnerships and Relationships

Gatlin, the Premier Partner

Indications are that community colleges are being called upon continually to do more for the students and the community with less money without raising the price of tuition (Cejda & Leist, 2006; Glass & Jackson, 1998a; Keener,

Carrier, & Meaders, 2002; K. McClenney & Mingle, 1992; Merisotis & Wolanin, 2000; Ryan & Palmer, 2005). The literature also suggests that the formation of partnerships with external entities will assist the college in meeting monetary demands (Gilder & Rocha, 1980). Typically, partnerships yield quantifiable monetary benefits to community colleges. However, the partnership with Gatlin yields a monetary benefit that is difficult to calculate.

Even though a monetary figure cannot be placed on the partnership with Gatlin, it is easy to see that his contributions become priceless. Gatlin's vision for the program expanded program offerings from the myopic focus solely on country music to that of incorporating other genres. One can surmise that this broader, more inclusive perspective was the cause for expanded enrollment numbers—even though those numbers generated increased funding through the state's community college funding formula. Cameron believes that the program is not currently, and is not expected to become, a revenue-generator for the college. As with many other technical programs such as dental assisting, nursing, and machining technology, these programs require a large financial commitment from the college to maintain operations and state-of-the-art equipment.

Since its inception the LGSET has received over \$644,000 in financial support from GTCC. According to sources close to the program, the school has begun contributing a small amount to the GTCC coffers recently and will probably continue to do so as the program grows. However, fluctuations in the

state economy, resulting in lower funding from the state could change within a relatively short period of time.

Additional financial benefits stemming from the Gatlin partnership are more difficult to measure. First and foremost, the mere fact that Grammy Award-winner Gatlin has offered the use of his name for the program, marketing, advertising, and recruitment is priceless. Some individuals interviewed believe that Gatlin's association with GTCC helped the passing of the bond referendum in May 2000.

Gatlin agreed to perform with his band as the headline act for the LGSET building dedication ceremony in April 2004, and subsequently attended a VIP reception before the concert. On that same trip, he also agreed to be the keynote speaker at the local Rotary luncheon. Gatlin's participation was free-of-charge to the college.

Furthermore, Gatlin has joined Cameron twice to make presentations at the National Institute for Organizational and Staff Development conference and once to the Community College Leadership Program at The University of Texas at Austin. Once again, all three presentations were without charge to GTCC.

The benefits of the partnership are not just one-sided. Gatlin also profits through increased name recognition and additional public exposure. This public presence potentially increases album sales and concert attendance for Gatlin.

However, interviews with Gatlin regarding his involvement in this partnership led this author to believe that the overriding motivation for his

continued involvement is fundamentally altruistic and philanthropic. Gatlin gives because he believes in educating today's youth and understands the importance of education. His ideas for broadening the focus of the program came from his understanding of the music industry and his desire for others to manage their careers with integrity. Gatlin's vision for the program is that students will learn how to be cognizant of potential pitfalls and setbacks and will possess the skills necessary to make savvy business decisions.

It is not easy to put a dollar value on a partnership such as the one formed between Gatlin and GTCC, but it is clearly evident that the alliance has reaped many benefits for both. This partnership confirms the statement made by Gilliland (1995) that “. . . everyone benefits when individuals and organizations come together in collaboration” (p. 43).

Local, Regional, and National Partnerships

In recent years, Jeff Little has begun to establish a variety of partnerships within the local community. These partnerships have included work with a number of organizations. A partial list includes:

- High Point Arts Council
- North Carolina Public Television
- High Point Furniture Market
- Eastern Music Fest

- MerleFest
- High Point Theater
- Independent recording studios
- A&V Company
- Westover Church

Little admits that a formal list of partnerships and co-op sites has not been collected. Such information could provide insight into the types of jobs that are available in the area, the penetration of students and graduates into the local industry, and a basis for searching for new placement opportunities.

Possibilities exist for partnerships outside of the local area through relationships established with advisory committee members and contacts in Nashville. A review of the Dark Horse Recording website uncovered information about a formal internship program at the studio. A list of interns and their colleges is available; unfortunately, GTCC was not listed. Due to the previously established relationship with Dark Horse Recording owner, Crow, GTCC students should be viable candidates for internship possibilities.

Other partnership prospects exist for the accumulation of equipment. Currently, Little is approaching equipment vendors to ascertain the possibility of establishing a program that would allow GTCC to utilize equipment on a short-term basis. Working in collaboration with GTCC's Foundation office could yield a variety of contacts with corporations in the industry. A large number of major

corporations actively seek philanthropic opportunities with educational institutions as worthy recipients.

A Firm Foundation

The LGSET began with a leader's dream, but the ability to bring that dream to fruition required the coordination, dedication, and expertise of many followers. Schneider and Dupree were major players in the execution of Cameron's dream. Their personal and professional motivations and goals were not only critical to the success of the program development but they also needed to align with those of Cameron. One can venture to say that without Schneider and Dupree's commitment and expertise, the foundational aspects of the program might have been less effective.

Dupree's introduction to the process was a serendipitous event. Fortunately, his expertise was recognized quickly as being extremely beneficial to the process, and he was welcomed to the planning committee. Since this was the first program of its kind in North Carolina, the planning team desperately needed someone with experience in the entertainment industry, and Dupree was that person. He had both connections in the industry and the technical knowledge needed to implement such a program.

Though Schneider had never developed a new program, she was selected based on the reputation she had earned through her 10 years of service at GTCC.

Schneider was well-respected within the GTCC community, recognized as a creative individual who capable of seeing the bigger picture and was not bound by traditional programming parameters. Schneider knew the mechanics of quality curriculum and was accustomed to the bureaucracies of a large community college system, making her an excellent choice to serve as leader of the curriculum development committee. Schneider's propensity to keep others informed resulted in regular e-mail updates sent to all employees of GTCC. The result of those e-mails was twofold: employees were made aware of needs of the program and its development. The hiring of faculty member Johnson was directly attributed to Schneider's update e-mails. Faculty member Dennis Hipp read that the program was seeking an additional faculty member with industry experience and began fostering contacts between Johnson and Schneider.

Kinard's knowledge of media, marketing, public relations, and the television industry provided just the additional expertise needed to round out the team. Kinard was instrumental in the promotion of the new program and in fielding questions from parents, members of the community, and fellow GTCC employees. His strengths lay in his ability to serve as liaison with all interested parties and his natural ability to endorse the new program.

A successful partnership only arises when the right people are put in the appropriate places (Roueche, Baker, & Rose, 1989; Roueche & Roueche, 2000; Wharton, 1997). This same theory also applies to design of the Entertainment Technology curriculum. To create curriculum effectively, it is imperative that the

right individuals be in place to make the appropriate decisions. GTCC was fortunate to have Kinard, Schneider, and Dupree at the helm of the program development committee.

Media Support

A review of articles regarding the LGSET published in two local newspapers, the *High Point Enterprise* and the *News and Record* (Greensboro), demonstrates considerable program support from the local media (see Appendix F). Each article is tremendously complimentary to the LGSET—highlighting faculty expertise, concerts, or events scheduled through the program, and providing a comprehensive overview of the program.

Reasons for such approving support from the media can be attributed to the longstanding quality reputation of GTCC. The college has been in existence in the area for 49 years and has benefited from strong leadership throughout its history. Cameron’s reputation as President has helped establish a positive rapport with the media. Cameron is seen by the community as a leader who has proven himself as a good steward of local funding and a visionary with the interests of the community in mind.

The High Point campus was established in 1975; however, GTCC’s reputation preceded its opening, paving the way for positive community relations. Home to the High Point Furniture Market, High Point has a longstanding

reputation as the center of the American furniture industry. However, over the past number of years, High Point has experienced a severe downturn in the economy due to the mass exodus of furniture manufacturing companies to foreign countries. As a result of decreasing manufacturing in the area, the community has struggled with steady decline in employment opportunities and fluctuations in tourism.

The LGSET has assisted in the revitalization of the surrounding neighborhoods close to campus. The beautiful new 66,000 square foot building, complete with outdoor amphitheater, now stands as a showplace, providing a sense of pride to both the community and GTCC.

The college is fortunate to have developed such a strong partnership and good rapport with members of the local media. Such relationships benefit the college by providing yet another means for free marketing and advertising, resulting in cost benefits to the college. Favorable publicity results in the elevation of the program profile and the reputation of the college as a whole within the community.

Exploration Techniques

Throughout the research the author employed triangulation through the collection of data from multiple sources such as college documentation, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and advisory committee members to ensure credibility.

Triangulation techniques included interviews, observation, and document analysis.

Prolonged engagement proved to be the most critical factor during the research process, as it allowed the researcher the prospect of building relationships and establishing trust with individuals and students involved in the LGSET. This naturalistic perspective allowed the researcher to become a part of the community (Merriam, 2002; Patton, 1990). Initially, the researcher observed classes and meetings with limited engagement. As time progressed, engagement increased as participants became accustomed to the researcher's presence. Participants began to initiate conversations, offering advice and feedback. Through frequent interactions with others the researcher began to establish a non-threatening and open atmosphere for conversation—as a result, a sense of trust was instilled between participants and the researcher. Evidence of this trust was exposed to the researcher during confidential interviews when interviewees were willing to speak candidly, “off the record,” about thoughts and ideas. Portions of these interviews were intended to give the researcher a greater understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

Furthermore, member checks were also critical to the research process. The researcher found it necessary to validate information by seeking feedback from others involved in the process. Member checks were invaluable throughout the research process.

Implications for Future Research

This research focused on the partnerships created during the establishment of the LGSET. As the research unfolded it was evident that the founding partnership between Gatlin and GTCC was only the beginning of the partnerships that would arise from the program. The ensuing partnerships have occurred as a result the natural web of relationships that occur when individuals work together for a common goal.

Literature regarding partnerships emphasizes that many benefits transpire as a result of collaboration. Yet much of the literature focuses on the financial benefits of such alliances. Though financial benefits are evident in the Gatlin/GTCC partnership, the financial appeal was not the primary consideration in the initial agreement.

Research of the LGSET exposed a number of topics which suggest the need for further study. Additional research topics include:

1. Partnerships created specifically for financial advancement.

Further research of alternative partnerships that create a more prominent financial gain for community colleges should be conducted. Results of such research can be compared to the establishment of the LGSET to identify benefits and disadvantages of founding partnerships with different parties.

2. Program development processes and results.

Additional studies should be conducted concerning the launching of new programs focusing on specific processes necessary for program approval.

3. The creation of programs which do not respond to immediate community needs.

Additional research should be conducted on college programs that emerged as a result of speculation, rather than out of a demonstrated need. Details of the program can be contrasted with specific aspects of the LGSET to identify similarities or differences between the outcomes.

4. A review of the LGSET in five years to determine program successes, new initiatives, and potential spin-offs in other areas of the college.
5. Study how leaders entertain partnership ideas and proposals and examine their role in the development of the partnership.

Inquiry Response

The purpose of this study was to examine the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology and provide an account of the program from creation to present. The initial research questions were the foundation from which the author was able to investigate the phenomenon. The questions guided the

direction of the research and served as the backbone of the story that was to unfold, the evolution of the LGSET.

In Chapter Four the author revealed the findings relative to the following research questions:

1. What was the historical development of the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology?

It all seems so simple, it was a President's dream that became reality.

(See Chapter Four - *The Genesis*)

2. What is the organizational structure for the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology?

The program was designed to mirror other programs currently offered at GTCC.

(See Chapter Four – *Fine Tuning*)

3. How was the curriculum designed to meet the needs of the industry and the community?

Four program options were created to meet the business and technical aspects of the industry as well as the promotion of talented performers.

(See Chapter Four – *A Dream Comes to Fruition*)

4. What is the appeal of this program for students?

This is the only program of its kind in North Carolina and distinctive for community college programs in general.

(See Chapter Four – *What Others Say About the Program/Students*)

5. How did all of these elements converge to create this partnership?

“Converge” is the key to this research—the joining together of elements.

The author believed that the most effective way to understand a phenomenon fully was to be a part of that phenomenon—to observe and interact. The author also felt that the most effective way to complete a qualitative case study would be to become a part of the culture being studied. It was through this association that the convergence of processes and efforts was revealed.

Throughout the research process the author discovered that multiple layers, built upon each other, resulted in the program as it stands today. To break the process into simple terms would mean to describe the program progression as an idea, curriculum creation, and student enrollments. This would not begin to do justice to the course of action that was undertaken during LGSET’s creation.

Key to the development of the program was the leadership and the individuals who had primary responsibilities for curriculum development. The selection and collaboration with the primary partner, Larry Gatlin, was critical to

the development of the initial idea, but without these other individuals the foundation of this program would not have taken shape.

However, all credit cannot go to those who created the program. Once the program had been established, it was necessary to evaluate and modify curriculum, and assess and acquire additional technology. It was, and continues to be, the foresight of internal program faculty that perpetuates the desire for increased rigor and the up-to-date technology and methods.

The community has also played a critical role in the development of the program. The entertainment industry community representatives have rallied around the program and supported GTCC's efforts through co-ops and by hiring program graduates. Many industry representatives maintain positions on the advisory committee and continue to provide insight and guidance through their participation.

The media has also played a pivotal role in the program through the complimentary promotional articles that have been written about the program and its activities. Without such positive press, many within the community might not even be aware that such a program exists.

The final component of the program is the students. Without student interest, the program would not survive. A college can create what it considers to be a premier program; but if students do not show interest, the program will fail.

Dozens of individuals embraced the idea of the LGSET. So too, those individuals contributed in one way or another to the development of the idea. The

partnership did not lie solely in the agreement and collaboration with Larry Gatlin. The ultimate partnership was created when program supporters, faculty, staff, and leadership converged to create the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology.

Conclusion

In the literature review, Kisker and Carducci's (2003) four main components for successful partnerships were listed:

1. There should be a shared mission, vision, and goal between parties involved.
2. The partnership must be mutually beneficial.
3. There must be effective leadership in place.
4. There must be shared authority and accountability from both sides (para 7 – 15).

The partnership between Larry Gatlin and GTCC does not contain all of these elements. It is true that both parties share a common mission, vision, and goal and enjoy the benefits of the partnership. Cameron was the sole leader during the establishment of the partnership, but he has since passed the leadership of the LGSET on to Little. Cameron, however, is the primary contact for ongoing interactions and communication with Gatlin. The primary difference between the elements outlined by Kisker and Carducci and the LGSET partnership is the lack

of shared authority and accountability from both sides. One could argue that Gatlin is accountable to the school for continued concerts and appearances; yet, the partnership was built merely on a handshake, and Gatlin is free to withdraw from his commitment at any time. It is highly unlikely that Gatlin will change his commitment to GTCC.

A better definition of the Gatlin/GTCC partnership is found in the work of Kanter (1994) who states that partnerships should contain the following characteristics:

1. They should yield benefits for both partners and should not be viewed as a deal but more as a living system that evolves progressively in its possibilities. Beyond the immediate reasons for entering into a relationship, the connection offers options for the future, opening new doors and unforeseen opportunities.
2. Successful alliances involve collaboration and the ability to create value together. An alliance is viewed as an exchange in which both parties value the contributions of the other.
3. Interpersonal connections are critical and internal infrastructures are enhanced opportunities to learn (p. 97).

The partnership between Larry Gatlin and GTCC has opened many doors and afforded many opportunities that have benefited the college. Through the association with Gatlin, Cameron has made numerous interpersonal connections with many other individuals in the music industry (e.g., Gatlin's sound engineer

previously worked for Cliff Miller; Miller was recruited to be on the original Advisory Committee and currently serves as Chair. Gatlin introduced Cameron to his sister LaDonna Gatlin, who sat on the original Advisory Committee. Gatlin's manager introduced Cameron to the Oak Ridge Boys' merchandise manager, who arranged a meeting between Cameron and one of the band members to discuss other GTCC business.) And finally, it is certainly easy to see that the Entertainment Technology program would not be what it is today without Gatlin's broader vision of Cameron's original idea.

Though Kisker and Carducci and Kanter reveal slightly different lists, the underlying theme in the collective literature is that alliances bring out many benefits, monetary and otherwise. Collaboration always brings new ideas to the table and new ways of looking at situations. Partnerships are strengthened through positive and negative interactions with others.

CHAPTER SIX

RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal Setting

Throughout the process of researching and reflecting on the program and looking toward the future, Chairman Little has identified a list of departmental goals. Goals Little outlined include:

- Create a network for Entertainment Technology graduates.
- Continue to position the program, locally and nationally, as a leader in music industry technology and education.
- Increase partnerships within the industry.
- Continue to provide equipment that not only meets, but exceeds industry standards.

Many of these goals align with the author's recommendations for program improvement. Often those inside a program have difficulty seeing where improvements need to be made and turned into recommendations to be considered. Little has identified a number of areas in which the program can be strengthened.

The following are recommendations from the researcher to be considered for continued program enhancement.

Staying Connected

Because the program is still in its infancy, administrators of the Entertainment Technology program are positioned appropriately to collect current personal and employment data on all graduates. To date, the LGSET has had 60 graduates, but throughout the life of the program, no formal records have been maintained on these alumni. Community colleges as a whole struggle to maintain information regarding their graduates, but a program with 24 graduates annually should be better-positioned to set the standard for better recordkeeping.

Current information on graduates of the Entertainment Technology program can be used for marketing and promotional purposes and for the creation of a network for program leaders, faculty, and students. Setting up a mentoring program between current students and alumni should be considered. Since physical proximity can sometimes be an issue, a virtual mentoring program could simply be a willingness on the part of alumni to give out their e-mail addresses to students, an offer to answer questions, or extend advice based on their experiences.

Internet Presence

An Internet search for the LGSET produced an on-line article which supports the program and a few other miscellaneous references to the program.

However, there is no real Internet presence for the program. The Internet is a powerful marketing tool for students of the millennial and gen-x generations, the primary age group of students currently enrolled in the LGSET. Therefore, use of the Internet could generate additional interest in the program and provide yet another means for cost-effective marketing. The creation of a website under the GTCC parent website would allow the program to promote itself, highlight successful graduates, provide a means of networking current students with graduates, and generate greater interest.

Hall of Fame

The Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology Hall of Fame was founded during the dedication of the LGSET building in 2004. To date, the Hall of Fame has inducted three members, inducted during the dedication in 2004. Since then, the Hall of Fame has lost its luster.

Revitalizing the Hall of Fame by establishing a permanent location within the LGSET, identifying potential future members, and annually inducting new members would provide the college with on-going public awareness and media attention. Further publicity could be obtained by the inclusion of recipient names and Hall of Fame selection criteria on the GTCC website, bringing more notoriety and importance to the honor bestowed upon the recipients.

Future Growth

Planning for future program growth causes personal conflict for many directly involved in the Entertainment Technology program. Program expansion would have several consequences:

1. Increased enrollments would reduce the student-to-faculty ratio or require the hiring of more faculty members.
2. Additional students in classes would require caps on enrollment to guarantee access to technology in the classroom.
3. Scheduling time in practice rooms and studios would become more competitive with physical limitations of space.

With growth comes change. Little estimates that the program is currently at an 84% capacity rate and that it will continue to grow at 5 to 10% over the next few years. His biggest concern regarding increased enrollment are the limitations of lab facilities and the time that the facilities can be open. However, he feels that increased enrollment would be a good problem to have.

A review of the methods used for marketing this program show that larger enrollments lay on the horizon. Currently, little marketing is done outside of the college with the exception of reaching out to high school students during college fairs. An increase in marketing efforts and a well-defined target area for additional outreach could boost enrollments. The lack of a solid web presence

does not contribute to higher enrollments. However, word-of-mouth advertising and media coverage generate enrollment numbers.

Analysis of Program Enrollment

The analysis of program option enrollments in Chapter 4 reveals that the majority of students are enrolling in the recording engineering option. It is possible that the allure of becoming a recording engineer would result from using cutting-edge technology, working and interacting closely with artists, the creating potential public name recognition on every album produced, and having minimal travel requirements.

Drawbacks to other options might possibly be a self-realization that students may lack talent necessary to enroll in the performance option. The concert lighting option may be less appealing due to the manual labor requirements, the lack of public recognition as all work is done behind the scenes, or perhaps the potential for extensive travel requirements. The artist management option may seem unrealistic to students because students may feel that there are limited numbers of opportunities and a significant commitment required for networking within the industry just to enter the field.

Continued heavy enrollment in particular areas may warrant future programmatic changes. One consideration may be for the college to place greater emphasis on marketing options with lower enrollments. Additionally, a cost

analysis should be conducted in the future to determine if all four program tracks are still viable options. It is likely that the relatively low cost of maintaining the performance and management options may outweigh the decision to cut options from the program. However, further study should be conducted.

Student Feedback

Distribution and analysis of a formal student survey seeking student input on curriculum likely will generate discussion regarding areas of potential change in the program. Serious consideration should be given to offering students opportunities to provide input outside of end-of-course surveys. Focus groups conducted by a third party, not associated with the entertainment program, would probably reveal new insights into expectations, outcomes, faculty, and curriculum.

Conclusion

According to Little, the entertainment industry is an area that will continue to experience much change from ever-changing technological advances. Little believes that the LGSET will continue to thrive due to the following factors:

- Digital recording technology has changed the face of the recording industry to allow for the growth of more small recording studios and independent music companies.
- Audio, light, and event companies continue to grow and thrive in the Piedmont/Greensboro, North Carolina area.
- Rapid growth is evident in audio and light installations in churches, schools, and homes.
- Digital recording training allows students to work in broader areas such as television and film.

The LGSET has proven to be a viable program with significant success in attracting students. Latest enrollment figures are markedly higher than those during the first year, accounting for an increase of over 220%. Little's contributions and his vision for the future have raised the quality and effectiveness of the program significantly. Evidence indicates that this program will continue to graduate individuals who will make significant contributions to the entertainment industry.

Without Cameron's perseverance, foresight, and willingness to take risks, the LGSET would have never been established. It was the pursuit of one man's dream, and the impressive execution of that dream by carefully selected team members made this program a reality.

The advantage of this program is that a partnership was established with Larry Gatlin, the perfect partner who possessed the vision to see the potential

from a broad perspective. Cameron and Gatlin were the strategists that formed the shell of the program.

Following Cameron's strategic vision, the tacticians—Schneider, Dupree, and Kinard—developed the core and gave the program form. Without the wisdom of the development committee and its ability to execute and implement ideas, student and faculty perceptions would be poor and the program would not be successful.

Innumerable partnerships have been formed during all stages of development, many of which could not have possibly been anticipated by anyone involved in the project. New relationships and new ideas have been generated and acted upon by various individuals at the college. Additional partnerships await those that have the imagination and the diligence to pursue them. When asked why Gatlin partnered with a school in North Carolina instead of his home state of Texas, his reply was “because they asked.” Partnerships are created through open dialogue; someone needs to begin the discussion.

The LGSET has become a signature program for the community of High Point, NC, and for GTCC. The program is meeting the fundamental mission of the community college—offering educational opportunities to those who would not otherwise have access. With open access as a core value, students of all backgrounds and capabilities can pursue their desires of employment in the entertainment industry, giving purpose and hope to many. The program

unquestionably reaches those who may never have entered college otherwise and who are now working toward obtainable goals.

The LGSET is meeting community and industry needs through the education of students and partnerships that bring together individuals from academia and industry. This program is making its mark in the community college world, in the state of North Carolina, and in the entertainment industry.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Interview Questions

The idea/community/industry needs:

1. How was the original idea derived?
2. Who created the original idea?
3. What factors existed that led the originator to believe that there was a community need for a program of this kind?
4. What kind of background exploration was conducted regarding the implementation of a program of this kind?
5. Were there data available that would indicate that a program of this kind was needed?
6. What other community colleges offer a similar type of program?
7. Is there a need within the entertainment industry for a program of this kind?
8. Why was Larry Gatlin approached for this partnership?

Larry Gatlin's contributions:

1. What is Larry Gatlin's contribution to the program? (monetary, indirect, advisory, etc.)
2. What are Larry Gatlin's on-going commitments to Guilford Technical Community College and this program?
 - a. Is there a time limitation on the original agreement?
 - b. Who created the details of the arrangement with Larry Gatlin?
 - c. What types of campus activities has Larry Gatlin engaged in to date?

For Gatlin:

1. What was it that sparked an interest in your mind regarding this project?
2. Are you involved in any other sort of partnership similar to this one?
3. Have you had exposure to similar programs at other schools?
4. What do you consider to be the top three critical aspects of working in the entertainment industry?

Technology:

1. What equipment was used when the program first opened its doors?
2. Has new equipment been acquired since the origination of the program? If yes, what types of equipment has been acquired?
3. How are the technology needs funded?
4. How do you anticipate keeping up with the changing technology?
5. How quickly does the equipment change?

Faculty:

1. How are faculty recruited for this program?
2. What faculty education and experience are represented in this program?
3. Is faculty compensation commensurate with salaries in the entertainment industry?
4. How was the curriculum developed?
5. How does the college know the curriculum meets the needs of the industry?
6. Do students complete a practicum or internship?
7. Do students create some type of public performance to acquire hands-on experience in a live setting?
8. How is this program marketed?

Building:

1. How was the community convinced to approve a bond in support of this program?
2. What steps did the college take to get information out to the community for a bond election?
3. Who was involved in promoting the bond for the college?
4. Where were monies applied?
5. How long did it take to construct the building?
 - a. What were construction dates?
 - b. Were special considerations made in the construction of the building (e.g., acoustical, technological, space, etc.)?
6. What college representatives worked with the architects to create the building and what expertise did these representatives bring to the construction process?

Funding:

1. Does the program generate money for the college?

Students:

1. What are the enrollment figures since opening in 1999?
2. What are the enrollment figures in each of the four options of study within the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology
 - a. Recording Engineering
 - b. Concert Sound and Lighting
 - c. Music Performance
 - d. Artist Management
3. What is Guilford Technical Community College's philosophy about student recruitment?
4. What geographical areas are represented in student enrollments?
5. What career services are available for program graduates?

Interviews with students:

1. What is the impetus for enrolling in this program?
2. What are your motivational factors or goals?
3. How did you hear about the program?
4. What is the best experience you have had in this program?

Alumni:

1. How has this program prepared you for the entertainment industry?
2. What challenges have you faced in the industry?
3. Now that you have been out in the industry, do you have recommendations for changes to the program?

Advisory board:

1. Who is on the advisory board for the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology?
2. How often does the board meet?
3. Where does the board meet?
4. Who coordinates the board?
5. To date, what recommendations has the advisory board made to the program?
6. Have members of the advisory board been able to offer anything besides their time and expertise?

Appendix B – Program Requirements

Entertainment Technology

A 25 19 0

Associate in Applied Science, High Point, day

Contact Information:

(336) 334-4822, ext. 4162 - from Greensboro • (336) 454-1126, ext. 4162 - from High Point

This curriculum prepares individuals for entry-level employment in entertainment, particularly in the fields of sound and lighting. Instruction provides training not only in these technical aspects, but also prepares students to manage careers in this contract-to-contract type of work.

Course work includes exposure to the entire live concert and sound recording processes. Course work will also include music business fundamentals, including entertainment law and marketing/promotion. Students will also receive course work in music theory and electronic music.

Graduates may find employment as entry-level crew and/or production assistants in concert or event setups, with recording companies, or sound/lighting companies. Graduates will also be prepared to manage their careers (or others' careers) in the sound/lighting area or professional music entertainment.

Recording Engineering Option

Curriculum:

Recording Engineering Option - Associate in Applied Science, High Point, day
Advising Code: A 2519 0 A1

Prefix	Course Number	Course Title	Hours per Week			Credit Hours
			Lecture	Lab/Shop	Clinic/Co-Op	
Fall Semester I						
MAT	115	Mathematical Models	2	2	0	3
ENT	135	Recording Engineering I	2	2	0	3
MUS	210	History of Rock & Roll	3	0	0	3
ENT	111	Introduction to Entertainment	2	2	0	3
ENT	134	Acoustics	2	2	0	3
Total			11	8	0	15
Spring Semester I						
ENT	131	Live Sound Production I	1	4	0	3
ENT	235	Sound Recording Engineering II	2	2	0	3
CIS	111	Basic PC Literacy	1	2	0	2
MUS	111	Fundamentals of Music	2	0	0	2
ENT	114	Entertainment Law	3	0	0	3
MUS	151	Class Music I	0	2	0	1
Total			9	10	0	14
Summer Term I						
ENG	111	Expository Writing	3	0	0	3
COM	110	Oral Communications	3	0	0	3
MUS	214	Electronic Music	1	2	0	2
ENT	151	Concert Lighting I	2	2	0	3
Total			9	4	0	11

Fall Semester II

ENG	114	Professional Writing and Research	3	0	0	3
PSY	150	General Psychology	3	0	0	3
ENT	211	Entertainment Promotion	3	0	0	3
ENT	237	Sound Recording III	2	2	0	3
MUS	121	Music Theory I	3	2	0	4
Total			14	4	0	16

Spring Semester II

BUS	280	Real Small Business	3	0	0	3
ENT	241	Equipment Maintenance	2	2	0	3
ENT	231	Live Sound Production II	1	4	0	3
COE	111	Co-op Work Experience I	0	0	10	1
COE	115	Work Experience Seminar	1	0	0	1
ENT	285	Capstone Project	2	2	0	3
Total			9	8	10	14

Total credit hours required for degree: 70 This curriculum is subject to change.

Concert Sound and Lighting Option

Curriculum: Concert Sound and Lighting Option - Associate in Applied Science, High Point, day
Advising Code: A 2519 0 A2

Prefix	Course Number	Course Title	Hours per Week			Credit Hours
			Lecture	Lab/Shop	Clinic/Co-Op	

Fall Semester I

MAT	115	Mathematical Models	2	2	0	3
MUS	210	History of Rock & Roll	3	0	0	3
ENT	111	Introduction to Entertainment	2	2	0	3
ELC	111	Introduction to Electricity	2	2	0	3
ENT	135	Sound Recording Engineering I	2	2	0	3
Total			11	8	0	15

Spring Semester I

CIS	111	Basic PC Literacy	1	2	0	2
MUS	111	Fundamentals of Music	2	0	0	2
ENT	131	Live Sound Production I	1	4	0	3
ENT	114	Entertainment Law	3	0	0	3
ENT	151	Concert Lighting I	2	2	0	3
MUS	151	Class Music I	0	2	0	1
Total			9	10	0	14

Summer Term I

ENG	111	Expository Writing	3	0	0	3
COM	110	Oral Communications	3	0	0	3
MUS	214	Electronic Music	1	2	0	2
PSY	150	General Psychology	3	0	0	3
Total			9	4	0	11

Fall Semester II

ENT	211	Entertainment Promotion	3	0	0	3
ENT	251	Concert Lighting II	2	2	0	3
ISC	115	Construction Safety	2	0	0	2
MUS	121	Music Theory I	3	2	0	4
MNT	220	Rigging and Moving	1	3	0	2
COE	111	Co-op Work Experience I	0	0	10	1
COE	115	Work Experience Seminar	1	0	0	1
Total			12	5	10	16

Spring Semester II

BUS	280	Real Small Business	3	0	0	3
ENT	241	Equipment Maintenance	2	2	0	3
ENT	252	Concert Lighting III	2	2	0	3
ENG	114	Professional Writing and Research	3	0	0	3
ENT	285	Capstone Project	2	2	0	3
Total			12	6	0	15

Total credit hours required for degree: 71 This curriculum is subject to change

Music Performance Option

Curriculum: Music Performance Option - Associate in Applied Science, High Point, day
Advising Code: A 2519 0 A3

Prefix	Course Number	Course Title	Hours per Week			Credit Hours
			Lecture	Lab/Shop	Clinic/Co-Op	

Fall Semester I

MAT	115	Mathematical Models	2	2	0	3
ENT	135	Recording Engineering I	2	2	0	3
MUS	210	History of Rock & Roll	3	0	0	3
ENT	111	Introduction to Entertainment	2	2	0	3
MUS	121	Music Theory I	3	2	0	4
Total			10	8	0	16

Spring Semester I

CIS	111	Basic PC Literacy	1	2	0	2
MUS	111	Fundamentals of Music	2	0	0	2
ENT	131	Live Sound Production I	1	4	0	3
ENT	114	Entertainment Law	3	0	0	3
MUS	161	Applied Music I	1	2	0	2
MUS	151	Class Music I	0	2	0	1
Total			10	12	0	13

Summer Term I

ENG	111	Expository Writing	3	0	0	3
COM	110	Oral Communications	3	0	0	3
MUS	214	Electronic Music	1	2	0	2
ENT	151	Concert Lighting I	2	2	0	3
Total			9	8	0	11

Fall Semester II

PSY	150	General Psychology	3	0	0	3
ENT	211	Entertainment Promotion	3	0	0	3
MUS	162	Applied Music II	1	2	0	2
MUS	122	Music Theory II	3	2	0	4
COE	111	Co-op Work Experience I	0	0	10	1
COE	115	Work Experience Seminar	1	0	0	1
Total			11	4	10	14

Spring Semester II

BUS	280	Real Small Business	3	0	0	3
ENT	272	Live Performance	1	4	0	3
ENT	285	Capstone Project	2	2	0	3
ENT	260	Contemporary Songwriting/Publishing	3	0	0	3
ENG	114	Professional Writing and Research	3	0	0	3
MUS	261	Applied Music III	1	2	0	2
Total			13	8	0	17

Total credit hours required for degree: 71 This curriculum is subject to change.

Artist Management Option**Curriculum:**

Artist Management Option - Associate in Applied Science, High Point, day
Advising Code: A 2519 0 A4

Prefix	Course Number	Course Title	Hours per Week			Credit Hours
			Lecture	Lab/Shop	Clinic/Co-Op	
Fall Semester I						
MAT	115	Mathematical Models	2	2	0	3
MUS	210	History of Rock & Roll	3	0	0	3
ENT	111	Introduction to Entertainment	2	2	0	3
BUS	137	Principles of Management	3	0	0	3
ENT	135	Sound Recording Engineering I	2	2	0	3
Total			12	6	0	15
Spring Semester I						
CIS	111	Basic PC Literacy	1	2	0	2
MUS	111	Fundamentals of Music	2	0	0	2
ENT	131	Live Sound Production I	1	4	0	3
ENT	114	Entertainment Law	3	0	0	3
ENT	151	Concert Lighting I	2	2	0	3
MUS	151	Class Music I	0	2	0	1
Total			9	10	0	14

Summer Term I						
ENG	111	Expository Writing	3	0	0	3
COM	110	Oral Communications	3	0	0	3
MUS	214	Electronic Music	1	2	0	2
Total			9	4	0	8
Fall Semester II						
PSY	150	General Psychology	3	0	0	3
ENT	211	Entertainment Marketing and Promotion	3	0	0	3
BUS	110	Introduction to Business	3	0	0	3
ENT	278	Artist Management	3	0	0	3
ACC	129	Individual Income Taxes	2	2	0	3
COE	111	Co-op Work Experience I	0	0	10	1
COE	115	Work Experience Seminar	1	0	0	1
Total			15	2	10	17
Spring Semester II						
BUS	280	Real Small Business	3	0	0	3
MUS	151	Music Theory I	3	2	0	4
ACC	120	Principles of Financial Accounting	3	2	0	4
ENG	114	Professional Writing and Research	3	0	0	3
Total			11	4	0	14

Total credit hours required for degree: 68 This curriculum is subject to change.

Appendix C – Founding Advisory Committee

**Advisory Committee Members
1999**

Robin Crow

Dark Horse Recording
Franklin, TN

Bill Daves

Business Agent
Greensboro, NC

Paul Franklin

Program Director
104 WTQR
Winston-Salem, NC

LaDonna Gatlin

Frisco, TX

D. J. McLachian

McLachian-Scruggs International
Nashville, TN

Cliff Miller

President
SE Systems Production Services
Greensboro, NC

Kim Pyle

General Manager
99.5 WMAG/WHSL 100
High Point, NC

Ed Roberson

Audiovisual Manager
American Audio-Video
Greensboro, NC

Kay K. Saintsing

Executive Director
North Carolina Association of
Festival and Events
Lexington, NC

Jana Stanfield

Keynotes and Concerts
Brentwood, TN

Kacy Woody

Technical Director
High Point Theater
High Point, NC

Appendix D – Current Advisory Committee

**Advisory Committee Members
2006-2007**

Cliff Miller

SE Systems (A national sound and lighting company. The primary production company for Alison Krauss.)
Greensboro, NC

Chris Alford

A&V Company (An events company)
Greensboro, NC

Frank Martin

Media Production Associates (An on-location recording and audio production services company.)
Winston-Salem, NC

Bobby Kelly

Techrep Marketing (A recording and audio equipment company.)
Greensboro, NC

Jerry Douglas

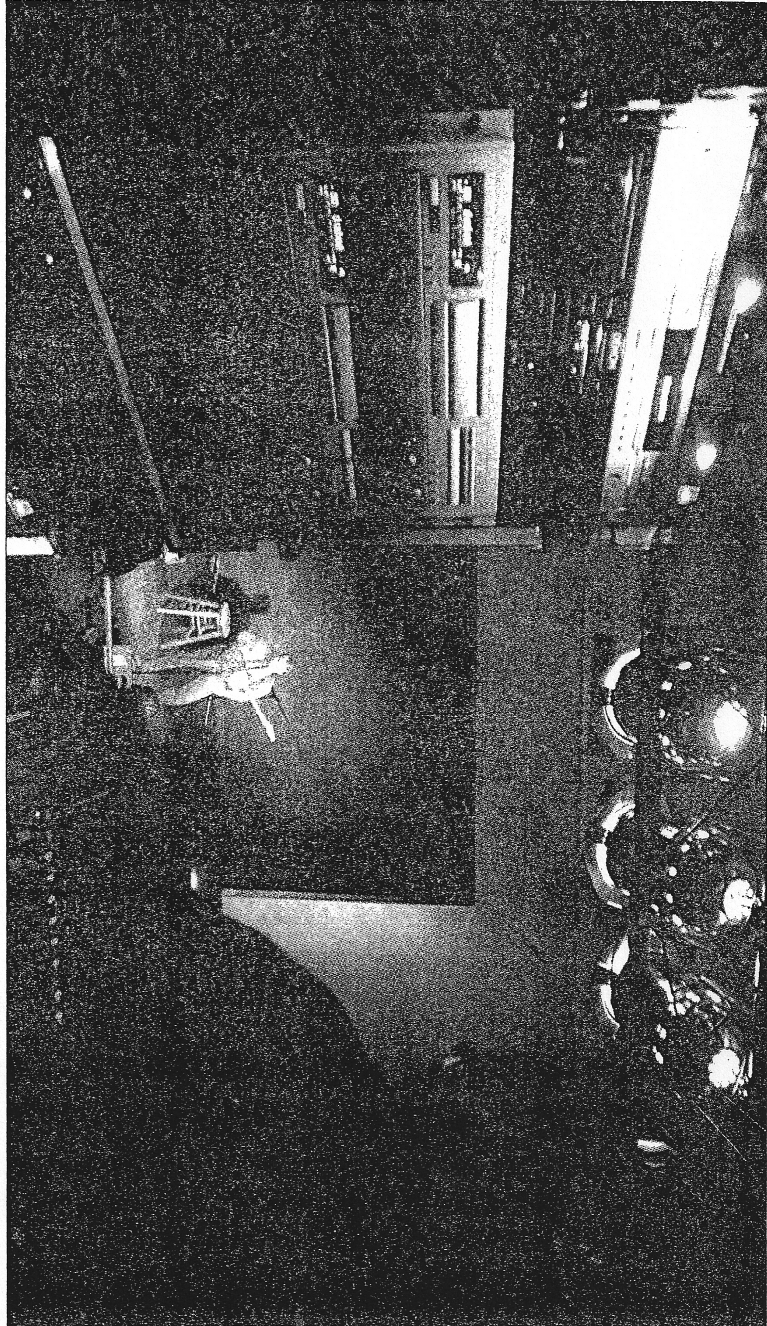
Grammy award winning musician and producer
Nashville, TN

Johnny Dorris, Jr.

Hallmark Direction Company (An artist management company)
Nashville, TN

Kristy Jackson

Singer/songwriter and Publisher
Greensboro, NC



Steve Harbour, who went through a similar program in Texas, talks with students as program coordinator Todd Dupree runs the sound and lights. Students will learn all aspects of the entertainment industry from performing to running the sound and light boards at GTC's new Entertainment Technology program.

PHOTOS BY JOSEPH RODRIGUEZ/News & Record
AUGUST 27, 2000
NEWS & RECORD

In the spotlight

Country music legend Larry Gatlin is a consultant for GTCC's new Entertainment Technology program

By ERIC HEISLER
Staff Writer

JAMESTOWN — Veteran music professionals all have their horror stories.

For some, it was the day they signed away the rights to a top-selling single. For others, it was the months between gigs spent flipping burgers at McDonald's.

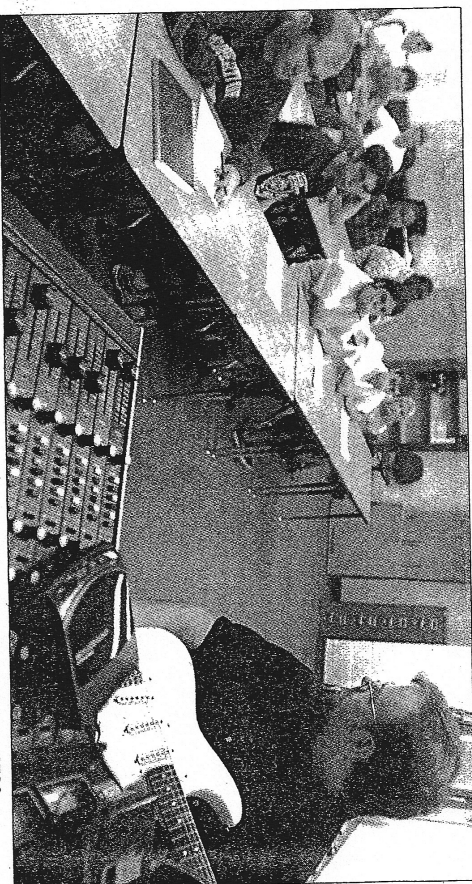
For country music legend Larry Gatlin, breaking into the business was no different.

"I signed contracts I shouldn't have signed. I made decisions I shouldn't have made," said Gatlin.

But Gatlin hopes that young musicians now will have an alternative to the bumps and bruises of trial and error through a new program at GTCC that bears his name.

Guilford Technical Community College's Entertainment Technology program is aimed at teaching the practical side of the industry to musicians who otherwise wouldn't attend college. The first of its kind in the state, the two-year degree program offers courses on everything from promotions and managing to sound and light operations.

"This is a business that has been hidden for so long," said Ed Roberson, who manages a Greensboro-based audio-visual company and is on the program's advisory board. "Up until now, unless you were lucky enough to stumble onto a good mentor, you'd have to go by trial and error. And that



Instructor Thomas Johnson (right) talks with students in the Introduction to Recording class at GTCC.

can be costly."

During the program's first week last Tuesday, one instructor lectured on the British terms and other slang words for recording equipment.

In another classroom, a professional guitarist played a few licks before fielding questions about life on the road with a country music band. The performer, Steve Harbour, of Mis-

souri, is also asked about the implications of recent copyright developments on the music industry.

Through courses like these, organizers hope that students not only will learn the skills needed to land jobs, but also will meet the industry insiders who can help them get one.

The brand new program was the brainchild of Gatlin and GTCC presi-

dent Don Cameron. During a meeting between the two last year, Cameron suggested that the community college form the Larry Gatlin School of Country Music with Gatlin as a consultant. Gatlin, however, thought that was a bit too limiting. Such a program would merely offer a two-year version of the

Please see **GTCC**, Page F2



JOSEPH RODRIGUEZ/News & Record

A sign welcomes the new students to the new program. At GTCC's new Entertainment Technology program.

MUSIC

Continued from page F1

theory-based programs at four-year universities.

Instead, Gatlin wanted the program to do more to teach students the ins and outs of the business.

Cameron agreed, and the idea took off. In its first semester this fall, the program, modeled after a similar one in Texas, is bursting at the seams with 75 new students.

"This is a more hands-on, technical skills-based program," said Todd Dupree, an instructor with a multitude of audio and visual experience who was chosen to coordinate the program. "If you choose to be a performer, you're not doing it for the money. But we think if we give people this background, when they're not playing gigs, they can do technical work for other performers rather than flipping burgers for \$5 an hour at McDonald's."

Within two years, GTCC also has plans to build a \$5 million new building in High Point that will house the program along with a professional-level recording studio. Organizers also plan to stage monthly concerts that are run by the students on every level from the promotions to the light and sound to the performing.

"We have some enormous dreams for this program," said Cameron. "Eventually, we'd even like to do a road show."

For the time being, the program is being housed in the basement of the Business Careers building on



Gatlin

the Jamestown campus. There, two classrooms are equipped with sample recording equipment, a makeshift studio has been set up, and sound and lighting equipment has been

installed into a small auditorium.

A side benefit to the program, GTCC officials say, is that most of the students enrolled would not be in college if not for the new offering.

"I had no plans to enter college," said 19-year-old Matt Brady of High Point, who attended "Introduction to Entertainment" on Tuesday. "I just didn't have the need for the piece of paper."

Brady, a guitar player, instead planned to work at his father's accounting practice and clock some hours in the family's recording studio at nights and on weekends. Now, he wants to obtain his two-year degree and pursue recording and performing as a career.

"I've been around music my whole life," he said. "Many of my friends are in bands. I just thought this would put me in the right direction. I'd rather do this than just jump into it full force without the knowledge."

The list of unlikely students in the program also includes Matt's father, 42-year-old Charles Brady, a part-time performer for decades who wants to spend less time accounting and more time helping to record music.

"I always wanted to do an album," Brady said of his younger days as a gospel guitar player, "but at the time, I never had the resources. Now that I have a studio, I want to help people who are in the same boat I was in."

Charles Brady said the two enrolled after reading about the program in a newspaper article.

"Larry Gatlin's name is what really got my attention," he said.

Tuition for the program is \$400 per semester, but organizers hope that what the students learn will pay back many times the cost in the future.

"If you don't have a knowledge of the industry, you won't know what's fair," said Kristy Jackson, a Bethany-based songwriter who has written for Reba McEntyre. Jackson is also an advisory board member for the program.

"A lot of songwriters don't understand copyright law," she said. "They don't understand that when you sign away your songs, they own them... I think this program is very important."

Students who enter the program can choose from one of four concentrations: performance, management, sound engineering or lighting.

They'll learn the mechanics through courses. But just as importantly, Dupree said, they'll meet industry professionals who can tell them about the music business and help them network to find jobs.

"This industry is all about what you know and who you meet," said Roberson. "I've never heard of anyone doing a program like this, but I'm glad they're doing it. I think there's a real need for this."

NEWS & RECORD AUGUST 27, 2000

(Heisler, 2000)



JERRY WOLFORD/News & Record

GTCC student Alexander Mangum plays an alto saxophone as instructor Thomas Johnson sets up a tube microphone.

A new beat goes on

A new entertainment technology program at GTCC exposes students to various aspects of the music industry.

BY DIANA ORNITZ
Staff Writer

JAMESTOWN — Greensboro resident Eric Welch had one foot in the Gate City and the other ready to run for a much bigger metropolis: Atlanta.

The 24-year-old bass player had Georgia on his mind because it was the closest city he could find that had a school with the two-year music program he desired.

A radio advertisement kept him rooted in the Triad.

Welch is enrolled in GTCC's new Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment. Designed for students interested in

working in all aspects of the entertainment field, the program is the first of its kind in the North Carolina community college system, said Don Cameron, president at GTCC.

Now completing its maiden year at GTCC, the entertainment technology program is a two-year degree program housed in the Business Careers building on GTCC's Jamestown campus. Students can specialize in one of four tracks: sound recording, concert sound and lighting, performance and artist/venue management.

"Whereas other schools offer music majors that train you well in classical or jazz, this program has more of a focus in commercial music," said Todd Dupree, the program's coordinator. "Our students might want to be country or want to be rock 'n' roll and find these traditional programs stifling."

So far, the program has been a great

success. Faculty and administrators initially hoped for an enrollment of 20 students in the first year, Dupree said. Now, he and fellow faculty members Kristy Jackson and Thomas Johnson find themselves instructing five times that number.

"The interest has been unquenchable," Dupree said.

Alexander Mangum, 22, is one of the unquenched. The Greensboro native returned to the Gate City in 1999 after leaving Appalachian State University in Boone, where he was a music major. He heard about the entertainment technology program at GTCC and was immediately interested.

"I have a love for music, and I've always been good with my hands," said Mangum. "So far, it's been a fun, loving, learning environment."

See Beat, Page 3

Beat

Continued from page 1

And one where students can get a lot of practical experience. Last month, Mangum and other students from the entertainment technology program worked on the technical aspects of "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas," starring Ann-Margret, at the War Memorial Auditorium.

"Everyone will have a chance to get hands-on experience, as well as to develop industry contacts," Dupree said. "Because, as we tell the kids all the time, 99 percent of it is who you know."

Kristy Jackson is the performance coordinator and one of the instructors for the program. A songwriter whose tune "Take It Back" was recorded by country great Reba McEntire, Jackson said one of the faculty's main desires is to prepare students for the technical and legal logistics they will encounter in the world of recording contracts and record labels.

"I have songs in Nashville that I can't get now because I didn't know to sign a reversion clause," Jackson said. "We're trying to teach kids now so they won't learn the hard way."

"This isn't 'rock 'n' roll school,'" she said. "The students have to take math and English and all of the regular stuff, too."

It's a program that many entertainers and technical personnel wish they'd had around when they started out, faculty

and administrators say.

"I don't know how many entertainers I've run into who say, 'Gosh, I really wish I'd had this when I was coming along,'" Cameron said. "It's far exceeded my dream or expectations."

It's been so successful, in fact, that plans are under way to create a \$9.4 million, 20,000-square-foot facility dedicated to the entertainment program on GTCC's High Point campus. Housing a recording studio, indoor concert venue, outdoor amphitheater and classrooms, the building is scheduled to be completed by 2003, Cameron said.

Various producers, musicians, studio owners and technicians across the country comprise an advisory committee overseeing the curriculum in the entertainment program. Dupree said these music industry veterans will periodically mentor the students in question-and-answer sessions to give them a seasoned perspective on the field.

Georgia Middleman, a Giant Records country musician, led the first mentoring session to students last month. Middleman performed songs from her debut CD, "Endless Possibilities," and answered questions from students about her entry into the music industry.

"We're hoping Georgia was

WANT TO ATTEND?

What: The Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment, a two-year entertainment technology program at GTCC.

Where: GTCC Jamestown Campus, 601 High Point Road, Jamestown.

Created: Fall 2000.

Purpose: To prepare students for the highly entrepreneurial, self-managed world of work in the entertainment industry.

Courses: 21 available in the curriculum, ranging from introduction to entertainment business and entertainment law to live performance and concert rigging and safety.

Information: Call Todd Dupree, program coordinator, at 334-4822, Ext. 2265.

the first of something we will continue to develop," Dupree said. "The more webs these students develop, the better it will be for them."

Students such as Welch and Mangum wholeheartedly agree with Dupree.

"I have no delusions about being a rock star," said Welch. "But this puts me more in the working man's world of music, and if that takes me somewhere, that's great."

Contact Diana Ornitz at 373-7318 or dornitz@news-record.com

(Ornitz, 2001b)

Sunday, May 6, 2001
NEWS AND RECORD

Entertainment school named after singer

By DIANA ORNITZ
Staff Writer

JAMESTOWN — Grammy Award-winning musician Larry Gatlin has made a career out of harnessing his creative power.

He won a Grammy for the song "Broken Lady" in 1976 and had No. 1 hits in 1977 and 1979 with "I Just Wish You Were Someone I Love" and "All the Gold in California." He's traveling across the country now as part of the national touring company of the musical "Civil War."



Gatlin

And somewhere in between gigs, Gatlin's found time to help GTCC get a state-of-the-art entertainment technology program off the ground.

"I'm not a nuts-and-bolts kind of guy, I'm more concept-oriented," Gatlin said in a telephone interview from his home in Austin, Texas. "I just threw some ideas against the wall to see what would stick."

And stick they did — so much, in fact, that the new program bears the artist's name: the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment.

Brainstorming began three years ago when GTCC president Don Cameron met Gatlin through a mutual friend. Cameron proposed the idea of creating a school of country music at GTCC named after the singer.

"When I heard about the possibility about starting a school of music at Guilford Tech, I was immediately jazzed about it," Gatlin said.

Gatlin said it's not easy to figure out a way into the music industry. He was lucky enough to get his break in 1971 when he tried out for a job as a baritone singer for the gospel group The Imperials. Grammy award-winning country musician Dottie West liked some of his songs and promised to try to help him.

"It was like a wonderful, heavenly accident," Gatlin said. "But, you know, people who want to be doctors or lawyers or school teachers know what they have to do. For peo-

Gatlin

Continued from page 1

ple who want to be professional musicians, it's just not that clear, and that's why Dr. Cameron's vision got me excited."

"(Gatlin) liked the idea but had a problem with it just being about country music," Cameron said. "He suggested broadening it, so that's what we did."

Gatlin was an integral part of establishing the entertainment technology curriculum at GTCC's new school of entertainment, now in its first year. Cameron said Gatlin helped point out aspects of the industry that only a professional could know.

He insisted on meeting with English faculty to discuss what courses might help music students in their careers.

"I said that if you combined one poetry class and one piano class, those were the rudiments of composition," Gatlin said. "From there, we just threw ideas out about what technical aspects could be included — makeup, lighting, copyright law — and it went from there."

In August, the singer spent a day discussing the technical aspects of the music industry

with students.

"Country music isn't exactly the genre that interests most students walking through our doors," said Todd Dupree, the program's coordinator. "But they all listened to him describe his experiences and learned that the same rules apply across the board in the industry."

Cameron said Gatlin has pledged to visit entertainment technology students once or twice a year. Gatlin said his musician brothers and former bandmates, Steve and Rudy, also may be visiting in the future.

Cameron said he's tentatively discussed plans with Gatlin to be involved in a fund-raising golf tournament in 2002 for the entertainment school. Money raised will fund more supplies and equipment for the program, which has an enrollment of 100 students.

Contact Diana Ornitz at 373-7318 or dornitz@news-record.com

See Gatlin, Page 3

(Ornitz, 2001a)

LITTLE: Background is in artist management, performance

(FROM 1D)
THURSDAY, APRIL 8, 2004

and artists management to his skills. He managed country musicians John Michael Montgomery and Montgomery Gentry.

Immediately before coming to GTCC, he was associate manager of Borman Entertainment Nashville, an artists' management company.

* * *

The appeal for Little of the GTCC entertainment technology program is that it focuses on what he calls the "real-life approach."

In the program, which is centered on the music end of the entertainment field, students learn the technical aspects of how to record music and how to put on live shows.

"I always had in the back of my mind to teach," Little said. "I knew that for me, as a performer, the vast experience of starting out on your own and learning how to do every step of the work is so important."

"It's important to teach behind the lines of the curriculum how it really works,

to know how it is to be on the road or in the studio.

"There's no substitute for experience, and (students) need the technical skills. ...

"They need the real-life vibe of what it's going to be like to be self-employed because they'll be running their own careers. ... It's unbelievable the experience we can give students."

"It's one thing to teach them in the classrooms; it's another to give them the experience."

The Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology is the only school that offers the technology curriculum in

North Carolina and one of only six in the United States, according to information from GTCC.

Its two-year program offers an associates degree, and students may choose one of four areas: sound and lighting engineering, sound engineering, performer and facility management, performance.

Students aren't required to take classes in general curriculum.

"Some students don't want to

Facts, figures

■ **What:** Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology, named for the Grammy Award-winning country musician who contributed money and who was on the advisory committee for building the facility

■ **Where:** 901 S. Main St.

■ **Dedication:** April 28-May 1, featuring tours and performances, including a free performance by Gatlin at 8 p.m. April 28 and a free performance by new school chairman and keyboard player/vocalist Jeff Little and a group of students at 4:15 p.m.

May 1. A schedule of events will be listed on 1D on April 22.

■ **Facilities:** 66,000 square feet, cost \$9.2 million (through state and county bonds), six recording studios, 250-seat indoor auditorium, 500-seat outdoor amphitheatre, library, television and performance stages, rehearsal spaces, computer labs, classrooms, offices, control and green rooms.

Guilford Technical Community College's GED and massage therapy programs also are in the building.

take the other stuff. They want to jump right in," Little said.

Little will be one of three full-time instructors, who are supplemented by four part-time teachers.

He might, he said, bring in friends from Nashville who are musicians, technicians or management representatives to give special programs to GTCC students.

* * *

Little hopes that the facilities at the school will benefit both students and the community.

In addition to labs, work stations, a control room, recording studios and banks of computers, the school includes a massive black-box indoor auditorium that seats 250 and is fully rigged for productions and an outdoor amphitheater that seats 500 and includes towers and stations for sound, lights and rigging.

The two venues could be used

for community events with GTCC students providing technical support while honing their real-life chops, Little said.

Little will perform with a student bluegrass group at the outdoor amphitheater on May 1 during building dedication events. He said he still plans to perform as a touring musician with his small ensemble approximately 15 times a year.

The building is designed so that equipment can easily be loaded into performance areas, and a lobby even could be used for a ticket window.

"The facilities are for the practical application of what's learned," he said.

"Whoever designed this place knew what they were doing. Logistically, it all makes a lot of sense."

"There's room here to make it all happen."

Vicki Knopfler can be contacted at 888-3601 or vknopfler@hpe.com

(Knopfler, 2004)

HEARTHIS

NEWS & RECORD MARCH 24, 2005

For

Students reap benefit of musician's experience

Music is in Jeff Little's blood.

He has spent his entire life as a working musician, and you'll find him neither showboating nor gloating about the things he's done. And yes, his resume is impressive.

The Boone native grew up heavily steeped in the tea of old-time music. Little comes from a musical family, and his multi-instrumentalist father owned the only music shop in the Boone area, which became a music center for a lot of top pickers. Naturally, young Jeff absorbed a lot. He began playing music at age 5 and started playing professionally at the tender age of 14.

During the past two decades, Little has created his own niche and made a name for himself as a critically acclaimed innovator, adapting tricky fiddle tunes to piano. He's equally at home in a number of styles, including traditional jazz, rockabilly, blues and a healthy dose of Allman Brothers-tinged Southern rock. Add a mouth-rack harmonica and vocals, and Little is a one-man show.

A musical mainstay on National Public Radio, Little has recorded a number of lauded CDs, performed all over the globe and been featured as a performer at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington. He has also spent a majority of his time in music management involved in major-league shows such as "The Jay Leno Show," the Academy of Country Music Awards, the Grammys and "Austin City Limits."

He guided the careers of country music stars Keith Urban and Montgomery Gentry (and has the platinum records to prove it)



Front & Center

Allison King

and was a big ol' dude in Nashville music circles for a long spell.

What does he do now?

Although he still keeps a hand in artist and show management and manages to keep his own selective gig schedule, Little spends his days toiling as department chairman for the Entertainment Technology program at Guilford Technical Community College in High Point. Now 45, Little has a family and wanted to settle down. He lives in Summerfield with his wife and two kids.

Besides, he thought it was important to offer up-and-coming artists an opportunity to experience what really goes on in the recording industry, and the GTCC program (only one of six in the United States) was a perfect fit. The program offers four different associate degree programs (recording engineering, concert sound and lighting, music/artist management and music performance) designed to, as Little says, "offer students real-life, hands-on experience."

One essential element of the program is the concert shows that are produced by the students each semester. Little says he hopes to work up to four professional-caliber concerts a year, — two per semester.

"Students already facilitate High Point Chamber events and other community events, but this one coming up is one of the first ticketed events," he says.

And it's a doozy. The inestimable Doc Watson will perform at 7:30 p.m. April 5 at the Indoor Studio at GTCC's High Point Campus.

But don't get excited. The show is already sold out. Unless

MOREONLINE

For more about the entertainment technology program at GTCC, visit www.gtcc.edu

you have a ticket, you won't hear Little get onstage with the Grammy winner. Tickets were gone the first day.

And how did Little land such a huge artist? Simple. Little and Watson have known each other for years.

"Doc and my dad, Jerrell, used to play together in the '50s," Little said. "And I grew up performing with him (he'll do so in April at MerleFest). Sometimes we'll just get together and 'pick' for fun.

"I wanted this first show to reflect North Carolina's heritage, and there's no higher quality performer than Doc.

"And as we grow the program," Little said, "I want to bring first quality shows and quality performers."

He's off to an incredible start.

Allison King, a local award-winning singer, has covered the Triad's music scene for 11 years for various publications. Contact her at gigs@earthlink.net.

(King, 2005)

Jeff Little and Doc Watson revive collaboration for concert Tuesday

MARCH 31, 2005
HIGH POINT ENTERPRISE



Small inset photo: Jeff Little and Doc Watson. Jeff Little is a quick learner.

BY WENDY KNOPLER
ENTERPRISE STAFF WRITER

HIGH POINT — When Jeff Little joins the legendary Doc Watson for a concert Tuesday night, it will be the first time the two men have performed together in more than 20 years.

Little is department chairman of the Lenoir County School of Entrepreneurship and Technology at Guilford Technical Community College.

Tuesday's performance by Doc Watson, his grandnephew, Jeff Little, and Little went on sale at the first of the month.

When he's not guiding students into the business, Little plays a mean piano, an instrument he's played since he was a child in Boone.

Little said he met and began performing with Watson, and the two have been friends and collaborators since.

"I've basically known Doc all my life," Little said. "Musically, he was a huge influence on me, just listening to him."

Little's father, Jerald, played with Doc Watson in the 1950s and 1960s. Watson owned the only music store in Boone, and the store became a gathering place for local musicians, including Watson.

Little said he began playing piano by ear before he even owned a piano. He began playing guitar, piano, bass and guitar, and Jeff began playing piano by ear before he even owned a piano.

Little said he was never formally taught to play piano. He just picked it up by ear. He began playing piano by ear before he even owned a piano.

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Little said he can't remember the first formal show he played with Watson.

"It was like, 'Let's book a gig together,'" Little said. "It was more like he'd let me sit in, maybe in the late '70s."

Little went on to become a professional musician and in 1990, he and Watson released an album, "The Watsons," which was a commercial success.

Little said he still performs with Watson, but they haven't toured together in more than 15 years before moving to High Point. He still performs with Watson at CTC.

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WendyKnopler.com | 688-3671



Doc Watson during performance at Windefect, shown in the photo.

News & Record

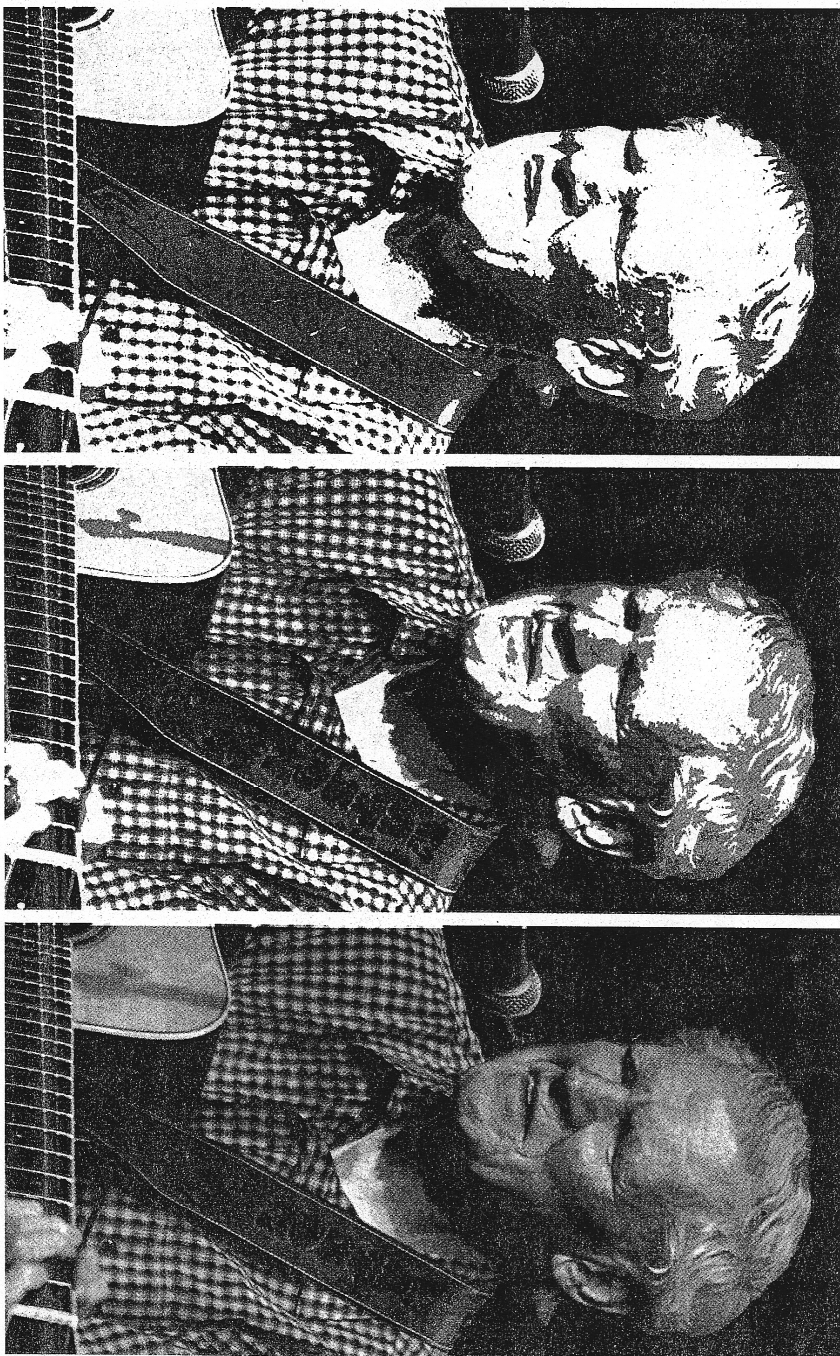
TOMORROW

Slow-food movement
takes hold in Greensboro.

Life

Tuesday, April 26, 2005

D



82-year-old Doc Watson doesn't perform as much as he used to. But the legendary folk musician wouldn't miss this weekend's MerleFest, where he'll play 10 times in four days.

By JERI ROWE
Staff Writer

"I've got to moisten up these fingers or they'll look like a wheelbarrow."

For Doc Watson, that all makes sense. He'll lick the end of his fingers so he can pick through what he calls a "rump stompin' tune," something such as "Milk Cow Blues" or "Sweet Georgia Brown." Then, no matter where he plays, whether it's an ornate hall or an outdoor stage, he'll make it feel as comfortable as a wrap-around front porch.

He did just that earlier this month at High Point's Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology at GTCC. He played a 19-tune set with his grandson, Richard, and two fellow musicians, Charles Welch and Jeff Little. He performed to help raise money for GTCC's

two-year-old program, which is led by Little, a North Carolinian who first played with Watson at his dad's music store in Boone when he was a kid.

At 82, Watson doesn't play as much anymore. He plays only special gigs, such as the one in High Point for his "good buddy" Little, or this weekend at MerleFest, the roots-music festival he started in 1986 to raise money for Wilkes Community College and to remember his playing partner and son, Merle.

Watson will play 10 times in four days, starting Thursday. He'll tell a few jokes and share good memories of his life with Merle before the 1985 tractor accident that took his life. Then he'll play guitar and show once again the strength of character and the determination of one man.

Watson has been blind since age 1.

Yet this man with only a sixth-grade education went on to anchor the 1960s folk revival and become a strong root of America's music tree. His influence flows thick through generations of musicians.

"I can't leave this old guitar alone," Watson told the audience at GTCC's recording studio in High Point. "If people like it, I do appreciate it."

They will this weekend. They always do. Musicians and fans from all over the world will descend on Wilkesboro just so they can stand within eyesight of Watson's strong jaw, Mount Rushmore forehead and cigar-thick fingers. Then Watson will show how he can hush thousands with the way he plays and sings. That is magic.

MORE: Merlefest performer Loretta Lynn is back in the spotlight. D2

WANT TO GO?

What: Doc Watson, performing at MerleFest
Where: Wilkes Community College, 1328 Collegiate Drive, Wilkesboro

When: 4:30 p.m. Thursday, Watson Stage; 2 p.m. Friday, Traditional Stage; 4:30 p.m. Friday, Walker Center; 6 p.m. Friday, Watson Stage; 11:40 a.m. Saturday, Austin Stage; 4 p.m. Saturday, Walker Center; 8:25 p.m. Saturday, Watson Stage; 10 a.m. Sunday, Watson Stage; 12:25 p.m. and 6:10 p.m. Sunday, Watson Stage

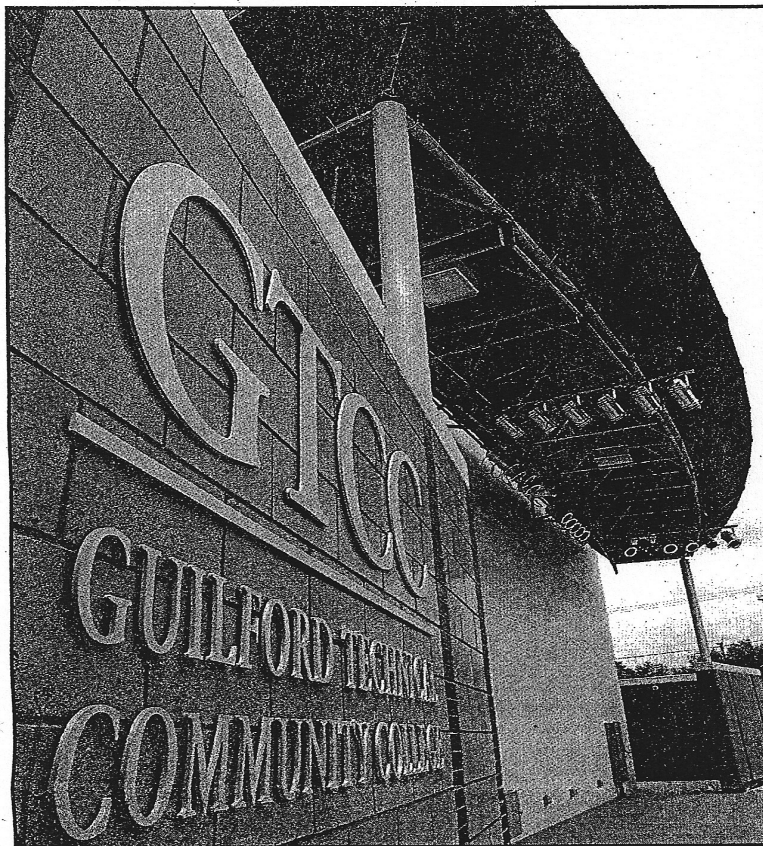
Admission: \$35 Thursday, \$45 Friday, \$50 Saturday, \$40 Sunday

Information: www.merlefest.org

(Rowe, 2005)

MONDAY, JULY 4, 2005
HIGH POINT ENTERPRISE

Learning to entertain



DON DAVIS JR. / HPE

The Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology at the High Point campus of Guilford Technical Community College has flourished in its new home.

College program teaches students techniques of putting on a first-class performance

Before you read...

The Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology at Guilford Technical Community College has seen its first full year of operation. This two-part series takes a look at the early success of a unique educational program that's housed in a one-of-a-kind facility for North Carolina.

BY VICKI KNOPFLER
ENTERPRISE STAFF WRITER

HIGH POINT — When legendary musician Doc Watson performed in High Point in April, the sound and lighting were impeccable, and the show went off without a hitch.

The music lovers who heard him likely took for granted that Watson sounded like the award-winning musician he is.

They probably never noticed that sound in the cavernous space, with ceilings that are 40 to 50 feet high, neither boomed throughout the room nor got lost in its heights. Or that lights didn't lurch about, as if searching for the musicians.

Few knew that all technical aspects of the show were handled by students in the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology

Coming up ...

Through the eyes of students.

TOMORROW

PROGRAM, 2A

PROGRAM

Some students have landed top jobs with touring musicians or nationally known festivals

FROM PAGE 1

on the High Point campus of Guilford Technical Community College.

The evening with Watson was a testament to the first full year of operation for the school in High Point. For its first two years, the program was housed in a basement on GTCC's Jamestown campus.

THE DREAM BEGINS

The School of Entertainment Technology was a dream of GTCC President Donald Cameron's for more than eight years.

His reasons were simple. "I love country music, and I always thought there should be a place in a community college for such a program," he said. "In my travels, I never came across a program that would help people get into the field."

Cameron enlisted the help of country musician Larry Gatlin, who did not contribute money but instead advised on curriculum and volunteered to accompany Cameron on speaking engagements to talk about the school.

The building opened in January 2004. Gatlin performed at formal opening ceremonies in late April and visits regularly, Cameron said.

Cameron and his executive assistant, Lee Kinard, who is a former local television personality, visited similar facilities in Texas and near Nashville, Tenn., where Robin Crow built by hand Dark Horse Recording Studios. Crow is a member of the GTCC advisory committee.

They planned the building on S. Main Street that is crammed with state-of-the-art recording and lighting equipment and is designed to function as a professional production facility.

Two years ago, country music legend Lee Greenwood went through the building, Cameron recalled, and was

AT A GLANCE

What: Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology, 900 block of S. Main Street.

History: Program formerly was in a basement on the GTCC Jamestown campus. The High Point building opened in January 2004.

Facilities: Classrooms, control room, three recording studios, two mastering studios, two electronic music labs, four rehearsal rooms, two practice rooms, indoor auditorium/soundstage that seats 250, outdoor

amphitheater that seats 500 and includes towers and stations for sound, lights and rigging.

School: is the only one of its kind in the state and one of six nationally that offers an entertainment technology curriculum.

Curriculum: Associate degree in entertainment technology with a concentration in either recording engineering, concert lighting/live sound production, artist management, live performance.

thoroughly impressed. "He said he had two technicians who worked with him and said if we needed assistance, to call him. We haven't needed to."

Cost of the building and equipment was \$9.25 million, Cameron said. Building construction was financed by bond money, and the program is funded by the state.

A TOUCH OF NASHVILLE

Jeff Little, a North Carolina native who lived in Nashville for almost 18 years, was hired to chair the entertainment technology department. He was a performing and recording musician and managed other artists in Nashville. He represented musicians including Keith Urban and Montgomery-Gentry.

"I am absolutely ecstatic," Cameron said. "We've had professionals tell us those studios and equipment equal anything they'd find in Nashville, and Jeff Little is a marvel. I couldn't be more pleased in my life to have facilities and the program turn out the way it did."

After more than a year on the job, Little still seems a bit like a kid who landed a job in a toy shop.

Some students have gotten plum jobs or internships because of knowledge and skills learned in the program. Two worked in technical positions in April at MerleFest, the annual traditional music festival held in North Wilkesboro. One has a full-time job at a lighting and sound production company and just finished a tour with bluegrass musician Alison Krauss. Another is employed designing and installing sound systems.

A Guilford County Schools program, tentatively called The Middle College of Entertainment Technology at GTCC, will open this fall and share the facility with GTCC's program.

"It's one of the most hands-on programs I've seen, where kids have the opportunity to connect to an interest they have: the music industry," said Ralph Kitley, principal of the middle college program.

vknoopfler@hpe.com | 888-3601

(Knopfler, 2005c)

Department chairman brings experience to classroom

BY VICKI KNOPFLER
ENTERPRISE STAFF WRITER

HIGH POINT - Jeff Little knows how important sound and lighting technicians are to a musician.

When Doc Watson gave a concert in April in the huge soundstage/indoor auditorium at the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology, he shared the stage with Little, who plays piano.

Little even got his father, Jerrell, to join him on stage and play banjo.

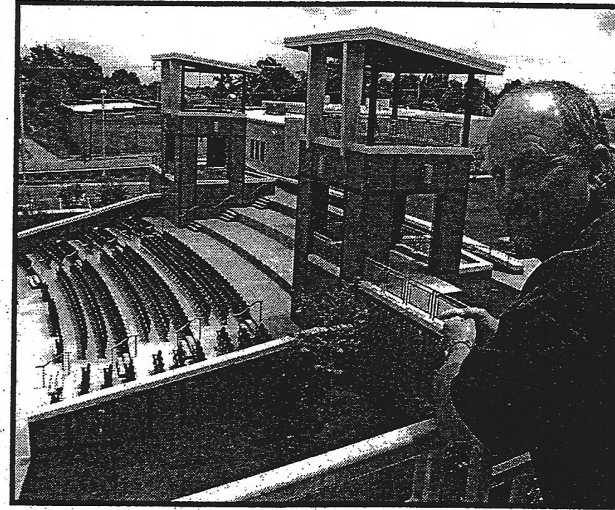
Little is both a performing musician and chairman of the entertainment technology program.

After assessing the first year of the program on the High Point campus, he is particularly proud that faculty members integrated theory with practical applications.

"It's important to have a balanced curriculum," he said, "but when it comes to the technical skills, you really can't teach it in theory."

Little was surprised at how much he liked teaching, which was new for him.

He taught music artist management, songwriting and publishing, live performance and entertainment



DON DAVIS JR. | HPE

Jeff Little, a performing musician, believes in hands-on learning.

marketing and performance.

"It's wonderful to teach what you have experience with," he said.

The two-year entertainment technology program has 230 students, and Little expects to see most of them return this fall.

Little is making curriculum changes to incorporate more live production work.

For instance, students take music theory classes to understand chord progression and music charts.

He's adapted those classes to relate theory to synchronizing the music with sound

and recording techniques. If the school's state-of-the-art equipment becomes outdated, he said, the experience is still valuable for students because professionals often have to work with older equipment.

He wants to bring in more concerts and increase use of the amphitheater and indoor sound stage/auditorium. He also hopes to bring in more musicians to talk with students, just as Larry Gatlin, the school's namesake, does on occasion.

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(Knopfler, 2005a)

Students sing praises of program

Before you read...

This is the second in a two-part series on Guilford Technical Community College's Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology. The program has seen its first full year of operation in a new High Point facility. Initially, the program was housed in a basement on GTCC's Jamestown campus. Today's stories look at the program through the eyes of current and former students, as well as what's in store for the future.

BY VICKI KNOPFLER
ENTERPRISE STAFF WRITER

HIGH POINT — Three students who are products of the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology marvel at the positions in which they find themselves.

"I realize I'm lucky that I've actually gotten to do what my dream job was," said Chris West. "It's nice not having to hate going into work every day."

West, 25, graduated from the college's entertainment technology program in spring 2004. He is an engineer with SE Systems in Greensboro, a lighting and sound production company.

He transferred from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, studying computer programming, to Guilford Technical Community College because he wanted more contact with people.

He recently returned from working two and a half weeks on tour with musician Alison Krauss.

Cliff Miller, president of SE Systems and chairman of the advisory program for the entertainment technol-

'It's actually exciting to go to school and learn something new every single day.'

Brandon King
Student

ogy program, said he talks to other business owners about their needs and incorporates their ideas into the entertainment technology curriculum.

"People come out with

STUDENTS, 2A



DON DAVIS JR. / HPE

Brandon King works the mixing board in a recording studio at the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology at Guilford Technical Community College.

OVERVIEW

2A www.hpe.com TUESDAY, JULY 5, 2005 THE HIGH POINT ENTERPRISE



DON DAVIS | HPE

Brett Ballinger works at a mixing board in a studio.

STUDENTS

Graduates have been able to jump into careers

FROM PAGE 1

qualifications and are ready to go to work," he said.

Brandon King, a 2002 graduate of Trinity High School, completed two years in general studies before starting the two-year entertainment technology program last year.

The 21-year-old worked at MerleFest in April in the production trailer, where live feeds from the stage are recorded.

King has a sound job with a jam and funk band in Charlotte and hasn't decided whether to finish the program.

"What I've gained from school already has enabled me to get a job, so if the band says, 'Come on,' I'd probably leave school and go with them," he said.

On the other hand, he said, he might miss school and his fellow students.

"All the kids who are there aren't there to goof off," he said. "It's actually exciting to go to school and learn

'People come out with qualifications and are ready to go to work.'

Cliff Miller

Chairman of the advisory program

something new every single day."

David Dudley, 25, is a 1998 graduate of Ledford High School and a 2004 graduate of the entertainment technology program.

He recently began work-

ing as a sound and installation technician with Church Interiors Inc. in High Point.

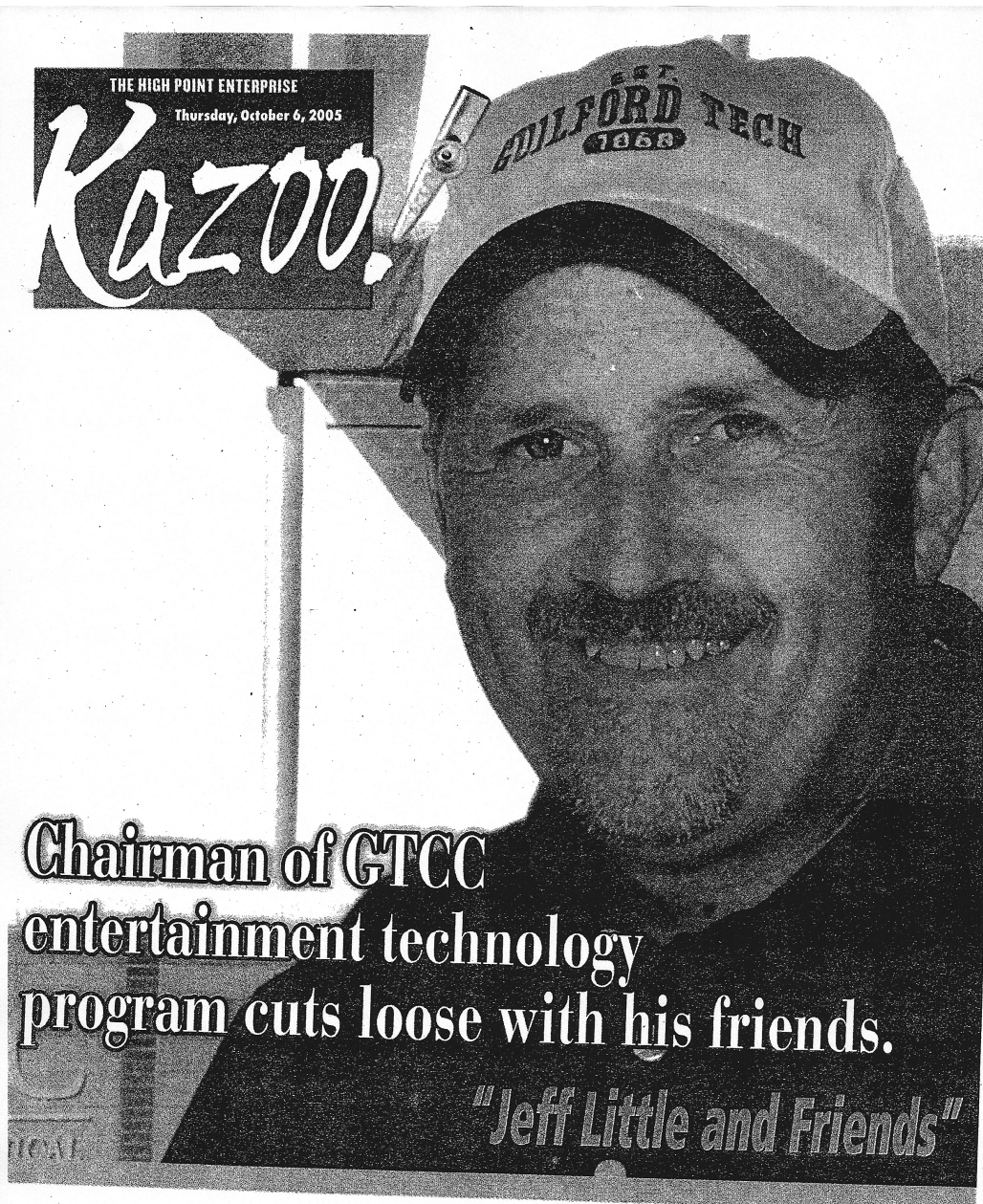
Before GTCC, he attended North Carolina School of the Arts, where instructors often had a little bit of an ego, he said.

"You can actually go to (GTCC instructors) and say, 'Hey, I've got this system and this question. How can I go about figuring it out?'" he said.

"They know what's going on; they have the knowledge. They instructed me good enough to go out and find a full-time job."

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(Knopfler, 2005d)



**Chairman of GTCC
entertainment technology
program cuts loose with his friends.**

"Jeff Little and Friends"

GTCC's Jeff Little trades hats, tunes up fingers for concert

BY VICKI KNOPFLER
ENTERPRISE STAFF WRITER

HIGH POINT—Since Jeff Little arrived in High Point in April 2003, he has been busy, often when he'll give a concert.

Little is chairman of the Larry Gatlin School of Entertainment Technology on Guilford Technical Community College's High Point campus.

He's also a pianist and performing musician with CDs to his credit. He has a host of impressive friends he met through his own career and when he was in artist management in Nashville, Tenn.

"People kept asking when we were going to perform here, and I thought if we did that, it should raise money for the school's new information technology program," he said.

"Jeff Little and Friends," featuring guitarist Wayne Henderson, is the name of the resulting concert which will be given Tuesday evening in the outdoor amphitheatre at GTCC.

It will be the first large concert held there since the facility opened in early 2004.

Little began acquiring impressive musician friends when he was a child, hanging out at the music store his father, a guitar, owned near Doon, Wis. His friend and mentor, Doc Watson, now a friend who performed with him in April at GTCC.

Henderson was another musician who frequented the only music store in the area and the place with the biggest record collection.

"Jefferson remembers meeting Little, who was maybe 10 at the time. 'I can't remember a time when he didn't play good,'" Henderson said.

Henderson, too, plays good, traditional guitar in the best country style, he says. He performed at Carnegie Hall and was honored

at the White House with the National Heritage Award for the Arts.

The two musicians also have performed throughout the world, including the Smithsonian Institution.

To accompany them Tuesday night are the band of Steve Lewis, who is a National Five String Banjo Champion, and upright bass player Josh Scott.

The program, like the musicians, will be informal, Little said.

"It'll be like the audience gets to sit in at a jam session," he said.

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Jeff Little with platinum record for Keith Urban, a friend Little previously managed

DAVID HOLSTON | HPE

IN BRIEF

What: Jeff Little and Friends, featuring Wayne Henderson, with Steve Lewis and Josh Scott

When: 7:30 p.m., Tuesday

Where: Outdoor amphitheater, Guilford Technical Community College, 901 S. Main St.

Tickets: \$10, available at the GTCC Foundation office, 338 Madlin Campus Center, Jamestown campus, telephone 454-1126. Money goes to the school's entertainment technology program.

Note: If rain seems likely, call 454-1126, ext. 2270 or visit the Web site at <http://technet.gtcc.edu/campus/foundation/alternative-locations>.

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Beginning in 1990, she held positions of employment in both administrative and teaching capacities at Northern Arizona University, The University of Phoenix, The University of Notre Dame, Davenport University, Indiana University South Bend, and the University of Texas at Austin.

In May 2005, she entered Graduate School at The University of Texas at Austin to pursue a degree in Educational Administration with focus on Community College Leadership.

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This treatise was typed by the author.